POINTERS ON POSTWAR PROSPERITY

An Economist Discusses Earl Browder's "Teheran" **by ALAN R. SWEEZ**

SEPT. 5
1944

NEW MASSES

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FROM THE MARNE TO THE POTOMAC

Victories Abroad, Dangers at Home—by the Editors

DATELINE PARIS

by JOSEPH NORTH

MISSOURI TVA *A labor leader discusses his union's plan for nine states.*

by WILLIAM SENTNER

"WILSON" AND THE BOX OFFICE

by RING LARDNER, Jr. ***A report from Hollywood***

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: *Origin of a Tragedy, by Bodo Uhse; Twilight of a Liberal: the Story of Oswald Garrison Villard, by Sender Garlin; Armies in Seven League Boots, by Colonel T.; Cartoon by Gardner Rea.*

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

WE HAD an aggrieved visitor lately who spent a lot of time complaining about our policy of illustrating the magazine. Mostly, it went like this: "But the paintings, or woodcuts, or line drawings have nothing to do with the particular article in which they appear." Our answer, like our mental attitude about the problem, can be summed up in short: "Well, why should they?" When you stop to think about it, is there any reason why an artist should clutch a writer's coat-tail? Your artist is as independent a thinker as your writer. For example: sometimes there are things that fit in—a number of Chinese woodcuts may be on hand to go into the pages of something on China. But it is far from necessarily so that writer and artist see things alike inside the same country. This, to a much less specific degree, is true of our spots—the little 3¼ inch or less black and whites we run every week.

This is only intended to start a discussion. It is not the first or the last word in what should be a dissertation. But let it be made clear, and shouted from your NM wrapper as you tear it off, that we want and welcome artists in this magazine—reproductions of paintings (which don't come off too well with our halftone screen, but which we nevertheless reproduce with pride while we occasionally view with alarm afterward), woodcuts, cartoons, and what have you. Moses Soyer will continue to review art exhibits, as he has in the past, and we would like to see more and more artists in our pages. Send it in, we'll promise prompt decisions.

WE READ a book over the weekend—the book which we think should be the answer to the Arthur Koestler school of pessimism. It came from Hollywood, it records the doings of the Writers Congress out there in 1943, and for once we think it's just what the publisher's blurb recommends: "An American War Book presented by 1,500 writers and scholars. . . ." You may not like the cliche, immediately following, but so far as we're concerned, it's a pretty thrilling account of what writers have been thinking and doing during the war—and not those who've been slaving, as Ben Hecht would have it, over studio casting couches. You'll find here a list of well known and well proved novelists, prominent radio writers, officers in the fighting forces, and such like. It's published by the University of California Press, and will soon be reviewed in NM. You can order it for $5 from the above-mentioned publishers.

Also on Hollywood, we're sure you'll like Ring Lardner, Jr.'s piece about *Wilson* this week, and coming soon is a discussion of what's happened to slicks and their writers during the war. It's written by Wilma Shore, who has plenty of experience in the field, and whose fiction you'll remember from NM, as well.

WE ASKED last week for letters; we got them and we want more. As our editorial note pointed out, these are times that require the fullest discussion—if you don't agree with what we say, or if you do and want to underline a point, please write in and say so. Our Readers' Forum is open, and waiting.

SPEAKING of mail, a good many fan letters came in on Gropper's Samson panels, in the August 22 issue. Lots of readers felt that it sized up pungently a number of ideas that needed getting across, and it gave them the excuse to show NM to people who hadn't seen it before. Gropper, the last couple of weeks, has been on vacation, but he'll be back in the next issue.

NEXT week is what we call a short one, on account of Labor Day, and if your editorials should seem a little dated by the time you get the magazine, remember we went to press Friday instead of Monday.

M. DE A.

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NEW MASSES

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WAR AT CLIMAX

By THE EDITORS

Not alone to Frenchmen, but everyone to whom liberty and independence are the core of life, the freeing of Paris is a jubilant, brilliant event. Paris of the Bastille, of the Commune, of the Rights of Man—Paris, the City of Light, can once again throw its bright flame across Western Europe and renew the hope that has never died among the imprisoned millions of the Continent. The liberation of Paris recharges the atmosphere of this people's war, electrifies it with the spark of people's resistance.

Do you remember the bleak days of May 1940, when the shrouds were pulled over this beautiful city? The Germans tramped over the broad boulevards smirking with triumph while Frenchmen wept bitter tears at betrayal. Now the French wheel of history is making its full turn. Now it is the armies of the Allies, the patriots of the underground, the Maquis and the French Forces of the Interior who parade the streets, joyous at the fruits of their hard labor and holding high the banners of human dignity and freedom. Many have died in this struggle and many will live because others died.

There are many scintillant chapters in the history of the battles of liberation and the freeing of Paris will take its glorious place among them. We will let the short-sighted and the picayune quarrel over whether Paris was completely cleansed of the invader by its heroic citizenry or whether in a four-day purge some enemy nests were left for the Allied forces to wipe out. The fact is clear that the Parisians themselves started the onslaught after a series of strikes and acts of sabotage climaxed by the battle between the police and the Germans on the *Ile de la Cite*. Behind this, of course, was the colossal fact that the Germans had been mauled and macerated in the west and in the east, making possible insurrection within the French capital. But of equal importance is that the people of Paris did not wait. They fused their anger and their will to victory with the Allied armies and struck at the critical moment. And this insurrectionary Paris was led by its own renowned Liberation Committee. Paris, from the very moment it fell, and even before, had an organized underground that took on ever increasing power and daring throughout the long months of occupation. The Parisian Committee of National Liberation, comprising twenty groups ranging from the trade unions and the anti-fascist political parties, to associations of professional workers, is in many respects even broader in its make-up than the Provisional Government.

Now France enters on a new stage of political life. Much territory has yet to be liberated. Every remaining vestige of Vichy, of Laval and Petain, has yet to be excised. The French still face immense military struggles. There will be many difficulties along the way and the attempts of a few correspondents to belittle the sacrifices made by the Parisians in freeing their city is indicative of a lack of confidence in some quarters in what a fighting people can do for itself. But all these difficulties will evaporate under the sun of French unity. The Provisional Government under General De Gaulle's leadership will face hard tasks. But the initial problem which it faces is to broaden itself and to become a government of genuine national union to include such vital sectors of the liberation movement as the *Confederation Generale du Travail*, the Francs-Tireurs and the united youth movement.

Paris is freed—and within a little more than ten weeks after the Allied armies landed on the Normandy coast, and after the great spring and summer offensives of the Red forces, the whole of Nazidom rocks. This is the reward of coalition warfare, of concerted blows, of the deliberations at Teheran. Hitler's Balkan satellites are in a frenzy to get out. They hear the doomsday bell tolling as Soviet infantry, tanks, and cavalry race through the Rumanian valley between the Siret and Prut rivers. The time nears when the corrupt and the greedy, sitting on the broken arc from the Baltic to the Black Sea, will have to account for their tortures. The whole patchwork structure of the Nazi alliance topples before the Soviet spearheads. This disintegration of the satellites, with Rumania the first country to pull out, is the prelude of what will undoubtedly happen very soon in Hungary and Finland and to what is already happening in Bulgaria. For months all of them have been throwing out peace feelers, with Helsinki rejecting the just terms offered by Moscow. Characteristic of these peace feelers was that they were part of a drive, largely inspired in Berlin, to play off Great Britain and the United States against the Soviet Union. This was before the second front was launched. But now they see clearly that these efforts have been fruitless and Rumania, in particular, has accepted the inevitable.

One may laugh at the comedy of King Michael "joining" the United Nations by self-made decrees. But the price of such membership was set by the Soviet Union acting in agreement with Washington and London. Bucharest can have an armistice if it observes a simple principle: redemption is in direct proportion to the extent to which Rumania fights the Nazis, liberates herself from the German yoke, and frees Transylvania from the Hungarians. "The assistance of the Rumanian troops," says the Soviet Foreign Commissariat, "to the Red Army troops in the task of liquidating the German troops is the only means of speedy discontinuation of military operations on Rumanian territory, and of the conclusion of an armistice between Rumania and the coalition of the Allies."

The Wehrmacht is said to have seven divisions in Rumania, and Bucharest will have to begin exterminating them. Within Rumania itself a strong resistance movement has been developing. Last year Antonescu's government decreed that all civilian arms be surrendered with death as a penalty for violators. There have been strikes in the Ploesti oil fields and in

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Bucharest factories. And the Rumanian Patriotic Front some time ago issued a program, three points of which called for the expulsion of the Germans, the overthrow of Antonescu, and the formation of a genuinely national government. It would seem that the last two points have been fulfilled and the Rumanian declaration of war against the Germans begins to fulfil the initial one.

With Bucharest meeting the conditions laid down by the Allies and fighting her way to their side, the repercussions in the Balkans will be tremendous. From a military point of view Hitler is rapidly losing the positions that guard his southern flank as well as the oil which keeps a considerable part of his battered military machine in operation. And from a political point of view Bulgaria is being hastened into taking the step of disengaging herself from the Nazi alliance. The crisis growing in Hungary will have reached an even greater pitch with the underground forces losing no time in bringing it to explosive proportions.

Planting the Seeds of Peace

THE blasting of Festung Europa and the rapid march of Allied forces towards the lair of the beast again emphasized the historic significance of the security conference at Dumbarton Oaks. Here the peace loving people of the world see the grand opportunity to forge the instruments for the prevention of war. While newspapermen heatedly protested the barring of the press from the meeting (they nevertheless continued to write endless inside stories), the central fact which emerged from the first week of discussions was that no security organization could thrive unless the leading powers shouldered its major responsibilities. That was amply clear from the introductory addresses made by Secretary Hull, Soviet Ambassador Gromyko, and the British representative, Sir Alexander Cadogan.

It is also obvious that the American, British, and Soviet delegations are agreed on the fundamentals of the organization's structure which will include an executive council, an assembly, and a world court. The council is to consist of the four leading powers in addition to as yet an undetermined number of smaller states. Force would be applied against an aggressor by a majority vote of the council thus giving all of the great powers a veto on all proposals. Whatever differences there are in these exploratory conversations revolve around the final size of the council and the method for determining the use of military sanctions. This latter point is an especially delicate one for the American delegation because of the constitutional provision that declarations of war must be made by Congress.

It is in this connection that Wendell Willkie has made a signal contribution by urging Republican Congressmen to support the proposal that the President be permitted to direct the country's military forces against aggressors without the prior consent of Congress. Without such presidential powers, Mr. Willkie insists, our participation in a new security organization would be practically meaningless. Willkie in making this suggestion is attempting to prevent the sabotage of a universal peace organization by Republican tories who are eager to make an issue over congressional prerogatives in the use of military sanctions.

Mr. Dewey, of course, has not said a word about this key problem. Dewey's Edgar Bergen and unofficial secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, made a great to-do in Washington about his desire for bipartisan cooperation. But this in the end turned out to be Aesopian language for partisan obstruction. For after his conferences with Secretary Hull, Dulles made it clear that he and Dewey would continue their partisan attacks on the government's foreign policy. In other words, in attempting to satisfy the desire of a huge number of Willkie's Republican supporters for nonpartisanship in the framing of American foreign policy, the Dewey-Dulles team pay nonpartisanship a certain amount of lip service. Then they suddenly remember that the big bosses—Hoover, McCormick, Schroeder, Taft, and Spangler—don't like this kind of talk and Dewey and Dulles begin singing the tune that the "Republicans can do it better." Thus we have another example of the complete moral bankruptcy of the Republican high command. At a moment when our Allies must be convinced that our government's commitments for safeguarding peace will not be subject to change every four years, Mr. Dewey resorts to everything from schoolboy platitudes to outright demagogy.

Clouds to the South and East

IF THE clouds were lifting from France, from the Balkans and all along the Eastern Front, it must also be recorded that the sky remained dark over China and that in Latin America heavy storms were brewing.

The Nazi hurricane that hit Buenos Aires over a year ago and did such harm to the cause of democracy and hemisphere unity now threatens the great nation of Brazil. Already the danger signals are up. The very day that saw Paris retaken also witnessed the acceptance by President Vargas of the resignation of his Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha. This event may turn out to be less serious than it appears at present. Indeed we fervently hope that the studied calm with which our State Department first greeted the news is based upon favorable information not in our possession. The context in which Aranha's departure from the Brazilian government took place, however, leads us to look upon this development with considerable alarm.

Brazil, it should be recalled, was the country on which Hitler placed his greatest hope during the 1930's when he plotted to sabotage the growing unity of the nations of this hemisphere. By working directly with the Integralistas, Brazil's fascist organization, he developed a fifth column within that country which came perilously close to seizing the government in 1938. The danger was narrowly averted. With the entrance of the United States into the war, President Vargas and Foreign Minister Aranha took a firm pro-United Nations position, bringing their country actively into the struggle in the summer of 1942. The Nazis thereafter concentrated upon Argentina where since the spring of 1943 their efforts have been crowned with a series of successes.

Once in power in Argentina the strategy of the Nazis, acting through the GOU (Colonels' Lodge), has been to spread fascist tentacles into the neighboring countries. Their efforts in Paraguay and Bolivia are well known. Chile has been blackmailed into recognizing the Farrell-Peron government. But the big prize in South America is Brazil; as long as that nation remains loyal to the democratic hopes of the hemisphere, the Nazi victories can be no more than beachheads. During recent months evidence of active contact between the fascists of Argentina and the Brazilian fifth column has been mounting. The latter has been growing bolder and winning minor triumphs. A few weeks ago five democratic periodicals in Brazil were suppressed; others have been fined for protesting the activities of native fascists; several strongly pro-United Nations officials have been dis-

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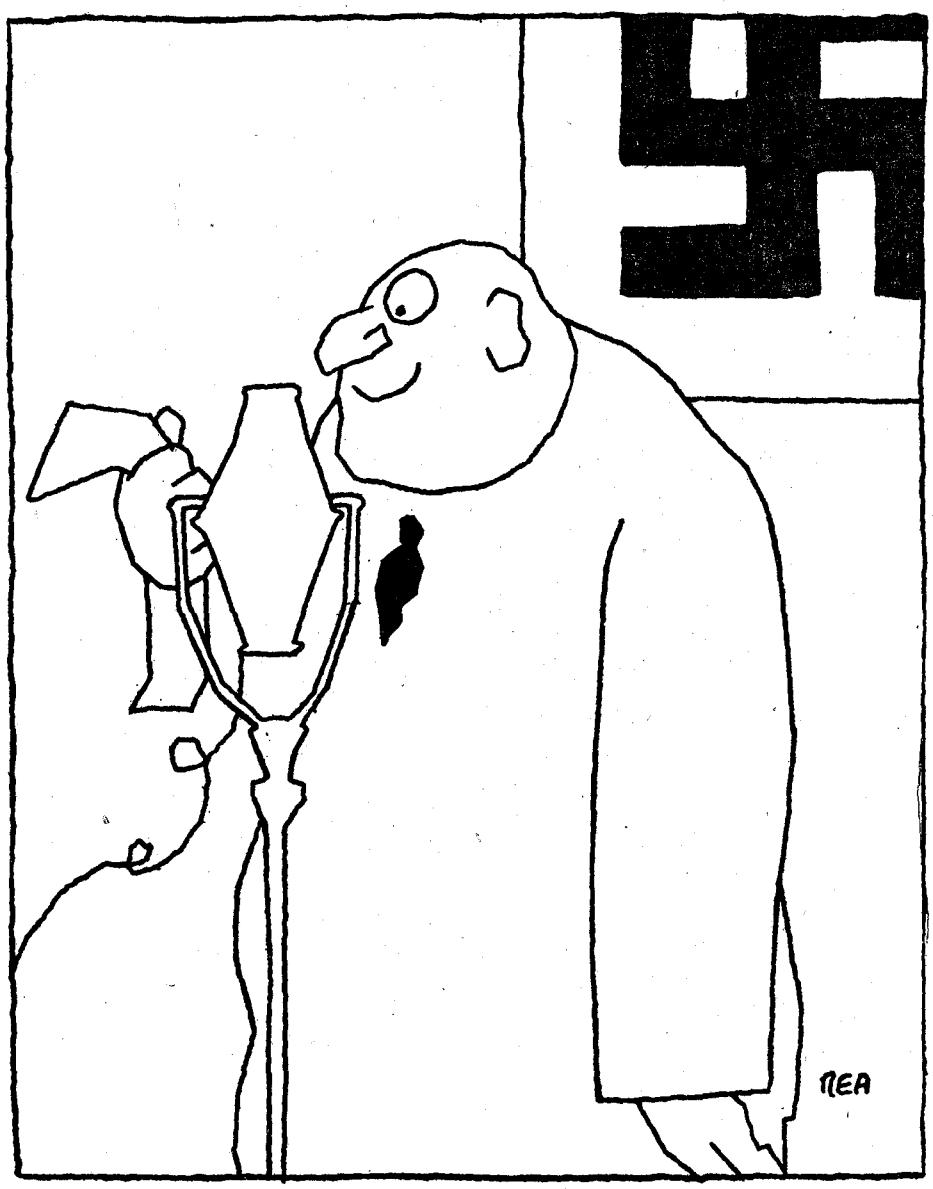

"And now may I quote a few passages from Herr Pegler? Retranslated into the original German, of course." Gardner Rea

missed and their places taken by reactionaries whom Vargas had fired in the early days of the war.

It is not to be expected that even the most reactionary machinations would cause Brazil at this late date to declare itself in favor of the Axis. The danger is a more subtle one: that under the influence of Argentine fascists and native fifth columnists, a new focus of Nazi infection will be developed within the framework of the Allied nations.

DELAYED despatches informing us of the arrival during the first week in August of an American military mission in Yenan, Chinese Communist military headquarters in the northwest, conveyed encouraging news. Together with the partially successful breaching of the Chungking censorship by several foreign correspondents, the lengthy visit of a number of them to the Northwest Border Region, and the fact that a few Chinese leaders within Kuomintang China now find it possible to make public demands upon the government, there are grounds for hope that some reforms may be in the offing. To date, however, nothing more tangible than encouraging signs such as these can be recorded. The negotiations between representatives of the Kuomintang and of the Communists, which have been going on in Chungking for many weeks, remain stalemated.

The grave concern over this state of affairs felt by China's allies is evident from the important officials whom President Roosevelt has sent to that country. Closely following Vice President Wallace's visit, Donald Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board and Gen. Patrick Hurley, an emissary whom the President has used on previous missions, have already left for China. It is essential to the Allied cause that the Chungking government be reconstituted through the elimination of elements whose activities undermine national unity and sabotage the war effort. It is to be hoped that by working in cooperation with the vast majority of Chinese, whose interests and aspirations are identical with ours, the American representatives can influence Chiang Kai-shek and those persons in his government who remain patriotic to undertake immediately the steps required to bring the entire Chinese nation back into the forefront of the world's struggle against fascism.

II

Now and November: Reconversion, and FDR

HOW fares the war in our own land? For though no Nazi or Japanese soldier has set foot on our soil, and though no robot bombs pour death from the skies, the war is being fought in America too. Two major battles are under way: one for the election of the next President of the United States, and the other for a reconversion program that will help provide a solid economic underpinning for the peace.

Recently Vice President Wallace, in addressing the Democratic state convention in Iowa, said: "A Dewey victory, no matter how estimable Mr. Dewey himself may be personally, will inevitably give hope to the wrong elements in Germany and Japan." Some newspapers criticized Mr. Wallace for this statement, but it happens to be true. It doesn't mean that Dewey is a fascist, but it does mean that what he stands for politically is sufficient to cause the fascists both here and abroad to look hopefully toward him and to give him their aid in the effort to prevent the President's reelection. That is one of the stubborn facts of life which not all the pious assurances or belated repudiations on the part of Dewey or his promoters can dissolve.

It is encouraging therefore to know that as Paris was rising again out of darkness, as Rumania deserted the sinking Axis ship, as the ring of fire closed tighter around Hitler's Reich, the trend in the battle to reelect President Roosevelt was not one to give comfort to "the wrong elements in Germany and Japan." The latest Gallup poll, taken after the major party conventions (and

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not including the soldier vote), shows the President leading in twenty-eight states with a total of 286 electoral votes and Dewey leading in twenty states with 245 electoral votes. We have our reservations about the Gallup poll, but other developments support the conclusion that at this point in the campaign FDR has the edge.

One of the most important positive signs is the decision of large sections of the AFL leadership to end their fence-sitting and move where the membership wants them to move: into the Roosevelt camp. This was signalized when the executive council of the New York State Federation of Labor, which had developed a more than platonic relationship with Governor Dewey, voted to recommend to the state convention that it endorse FDR, a proposal which that gathering enthusiastically acted on, with only seven dissenting votes out of more than 1,000. This followed the unanimous endorsement of a fourth term by the executive board of the AFL's largest union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. President Green's recent announcement of a campaign to get the 7,000,000 AFL members to vote, and his instructions to set up state and local political action committees should also help swell the Roosevelt total.

Republican efforts to swing the Negro vote away from the President likewise were dealt a blow during the past week when an outstanding Negro leader, Dr. Channing H. Tobias, member of the national board of the YMCA, and a lifelong Republican, announced his support of FDR and accepted membership in the National Citizens Political Action Committee. Another positive development was the statement issued by more than six hundred leading figures in the arts and sciences calling for Roosevelt's reelection. (See page 24 for the text of the statement.)

We want to warn, however, against any tendency to regard a trend in August as a guarantee of election in November. If the Gallup poll is even approximately correct, the President's margin is too close for comfort, and in a number of states is so slim that a relatively small number of votes could easily reverse the picture. Let us not underestimate the opposition. The Republican campaigns in 1936 and 1940 were amateur improvisations compared to the present one. Behind Dewey stands not only the lumbering Old Guard—the Hoovers, Tafts, and Vandenbergs—but the slick promoters of the Herbert Brownell type, for whom a political campaign is a carefully calculated business with no tricks missed or foul blows spared. And behind Dewey too are eighty percent of the press, the radio, and all that money can buy.

In this connection, a few words about the assaults on the CIO Political Action Committee. This seems to be the 1944 version of the 1936 Red smear—the dismal results of that effort seem to have taught nothing to the GOP bourbons. The latest issues of the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life*, magazines with a combined circulation of five or six million, contain two samples that are an affront to American journalism. In the *Post* Louis Waldman, a man whose activities proved too much for even the cast-iron stomachs of the right wing cabal formerly in control of the American Labor Party, published an article entitled "Will the CIO Capture the Democratic Party?" The editors present this article as the work of a man who knows the labor movement from the inside. He is an insider in the same sense that Benedict Arnold was. Though Waldman, once a Socialist, now professes to be a Democrat, his article might have been processed in the office of the Republican National Committee. It is permeated with hostility toward President Roosevelt and toward the labor movement.

The *Life* job is, if anything, even viler. It is very much in the spirit of the speech made at the Republican convention by the wife of *Life's* publisher, Rep. Clare Boothe Luce — a speech that couched its appeal to the hate groups. When *Life* writes in an editorial on Sidney Hillman, who is a Jew and of foreign birth (but a better American than nine-tenths of his traducers) that "this will be a nation jealously protecting its identity, suspiciously opposed to anything foreign," and that the American Labor Party, of which Hillman is chairman, is "foreign" because it was born in New York, it knows what the effects of its words will be—knows it as well as did Hamilton Fish when he said that the Jews will vote for Roosevelt. Throughout this whole campaign against Hillman and PAC there are the ugly undertones of anti-Semitism which not even slick magazine paper can muffle. And as is usually the case, anti-Semitism proves to be the twin of anti-Communism.

This un-American campaign is only incidentally directed at Sidney Hillman and at PAC. Its real target is the President and all he represents, nationally and internationally. It is a campaign against America's future and the hopes of the plain people of all countries. It requires an answer—an answer in the non-partisan spirit of the Negro Republican, Dr. Tobias, and of the countless men and women in all walks of life who are determined that our country shall not return to the dead-end of Hooverism, but must go forward under its present wise leadership to the freedom, security and peace whose milestones are Moscow, Cairo, Teheran, and Dumbarton Oaks.

The Threat of the Apple Stand

MEANWHILE that young Republican mind recommended to the American electorate by Mr. Dewey is showing no signs of being carried away by hot-headed emotion or any consideration of the welfare of the American people in its thought on reconversion. The Republicans and their anti-Roosevelt Democrat allies on the House Ways and Means Committee firmly resisted all demands for passage of decent reconversion legislation. Enhanced and fortified by the eighty-one-year-old mentality of Chairman Robert Doughton, they reported out a bill calculated to put an apple stand on every corner. It should please Candidate Dewey, who in a message to the New York State AFL convention, took a crack indirectly at the labor-approved Kilgore-Celler bill. He did this by reaching into his subconscious, pulling out a relic of Hooverism and presenting it with an air of coining a phrase. "Not doles but jobs for all" was what Dewey demanded.

The George bill on reconversion passed by the Senate was bad enough. But the House committee whacked so much from its various features, which gingerly approached the problem of human needs in reconversion, that it makes it possible for phoneys to urge the unsatisfactory George bill as a liberal measure in contrast. The George bill, far from guaranteeing "doles," left the jobless at the mercy of inadequate state's legislation. This do-nothing legislative feature, known as recognition of "states' rights," was almost the only part of the George bill left untouched by the House committee. But even the George bill took care of some three million workers in government arsenals and shipyards who would otherwise have been left high and dry without any benefits. This provision the House committee knocked out—also a modest provision to pay a worker up to $200 to

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move his family back home or to a new job in the reconversion period—which was cut from two years to one. The committee killed a provision for an anemic industry-labor-agriculture board which could merely advise. With the fight on reconversion to be carried to the floor of the House this week, the CIO prepared to support an AFL bill introduced by Rep. John Dingell (D., Mich.), which contained most of the essentials of the Celler bill, despite the AFL's pointed failure to seek CIO support and its continued editorial attacks on the CIO's Political Action Committee.

If the Republicrats are hardening their hearts to the prospect of soup lines and fondly figuring on thus swelling the Dewey "discontent" votes, at least one business group is approaching reconversion legislation with a hard head. Stanley J. Cummings, New York director of the American Business Congress, numbering 2,000 small businessmen, told a press conference that planned reconversion along the Kilgore-Murray-Truman bill lines is not only necessary for postwar prosperity but less expensive to the taxpayers. He scouted the theory that reconversion is a "labor" measure.

In a related field, the inadequate much-amended Colmer bill for disposal of surplus war property, valued at from $75,000,000,000 to $100,000,000,000, passed by the House, attracted attention. The bill was authored by no less an authority than the administrator of surplus property, himself, Will Clayton, he admitted before the Mead (formerly Truman) War Investigating Committee. It now goes to the Senate Military Affairs Committee, which has before it a better Senate bill which would take surplus property away from Clayton and turn over administration to an eight-man board, and would provide against monopoly control. It also would allow the Smaller War Plants Corporation to buy property on behalf of small business and put the sale of surplus farm properties in the hands of the Farm Security Administration. Clayton was questioned by the Mead committee on charges he has worked closely with real estate interests in disposal of farm lands.

As if highlighting the formation of ever sharper lines in the gigantic fight over reconversion which is coloring all else on the home front, was Charles E. Wilson's resignation just as he was about to direct WPB during Donald Nelson's confidential mission to China. Wilson in his letter to President Roosevelt disclaimed any dissension in WPB over reconversion, and denied there was any issue in WPB as between small and large business. If reports, and labor's impression, that Wilson had gone over to the side of the Procurement Services in espousing opposition to an orderly and gradual reconversion to civilian production, are wrong, then the former president of General Electric conceivably can do much outside the WPB in winning over big industry in support of his actual position.

IN BRIEF, then: though the headlines hourly proclaim fresh victories on the military fronts, we are in danger on the home front. The future of America is being decided now, in our legislative chambers, and the sad reality is this: the people are not making their weight felt, *unitedly*. Now is the time to deluge those about to vote on the crucial issues of reconversion, with the demand that they cast their ballot for an economy of abundance. The Kilgore-Celler measure is for the good of the entire nation: it is false to see it as merely a bill for the good of "labor" alone. Unless this is made clear to the American people, the enemy within may succeed where the enemy abroad failed.

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

ARMIES IN SEVEN LEAGUE BOOTS

At this writing (August 27) the amazing Allied campaign in northwestern France is rounding out its first month. It is such a brilliant example of a war of maneuver that it is worth while studying with the aid of a map. It all started with the capture of Avranches by American troops on July 31. This was the signal for Patton's breakthrough. Patton's armor thrust south to Rennes August 4 and west to St. Malo and Brest. St. Malo surrendered on August 17. Brest is still holding out. Patton sent a column south to Nantes which was captured on August 10. Simultaneously, Patton had sent a column from Avranches to Laval which was taken on August 5. At Laval Patton's armor split: one column raced south to capture Angers on August 10 (the same day as Nantes) and another one (the main forces) struck directly east and captured Le Mans, also on August 10.

Le Mans became the pivot of the great flanking maneuver which actually created the Falaise-Argentan pocket. From Le Mans, Patton's tanks and motorized infantry raced due north to Argentan to form with the Canadians (advancing from the region of Caen toward Falaise) the above pocket which all but trapped the German Seventh Army. Other columns of Patton's army struck from Le Mans toward Dreux, Chartres, Chateaudun and Orleans and south toward Tours. Dreux, Chartres, Chateadun, and Orleans were taken on August 17. Tours, as I write, has not yet been taken. At this point Dreux became the pivot for a new flanking move just as Le Mans had been a week before. From Dreux, Patton dashed for Evreux and Nantes, as well as for the Seine crossings between these two towns. Nantes was reached on August 20 and Evreux on August 24. Meanwhile the Canadians and British were advancing on Lisieux, striving to link up with the Americans south of Rouen. This junction was reported effected last week, but it must have been only temporary, because the second trap is reported to have failed to snap shut.

Meanwhile (we realize that we are using and abusing this word, but what can we do? General Patton seems to have been all over the place at the same time) other Patton columns struck out from captured Orleans and raced for Fontainebleau (taken on August 22) and the Seine, and for Sens (taken on August 22) and Troyes (taken on Aug-

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ust 25). A relief column to help the FFI capture Paris thrust out from Chartres and passed through the Arc de Triomphe on August 25.

At this moment the movements of Patton's armor are again cloaked in official secrecy. It has been reported unofficially that it is rampaging between the Seine and the Marne and is only some seventy miles from Verdun and much less than 100 miles from the German border. It is entirely probable that with Troyes as a new (third) pivot General Patton will send one force north toward Reims and the Aisne River in order to threaten the rear of the German Fifteenth Army guarding the "robot-coast," while another races across the Upper Meuse, through the so-called *Trouee de Charmes* (Charmes Gap) in the Nancy region, toward the Saar.

Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son . . .

ALLIED armies landed in southern France on August 15 in the Hyeres-Frejus area of the Riviera. Marseilles was taken eight days later (August 23) and on that same day a column racing due north took Grenoble, 150 miles from the landing beaches. On August 26 this column sprouted a branch toward Chambery, another westward in the direction of Lyon, while the central "stem" reached the Swiss border north of Annecy. Toulon is practically in Allied hands, but still unusable because of some holdout forts which shell the port.

The Germans who are still between our main southern column and the Alpine border of Italy are completely neutralized. Those in the so-called Annecy territory are pressed against the border of Switzerland and face internment. The presence of neutral Switzerland now automatically extends our right flank northward about 125 miles and it may be said that to all practical intents and purposes the distance separating Generals Patton and Patch is only 125 miles —roughly the distance between Belfort and Troyes, via Langres.

Thus it is clear that the Germans pocketed in the huge 100,000 square mile area of central and southwestern France will never get out of the Patton-Patch trap. They may hold out for some time at the great ports in order to delay the flow of our supplies. They may stick it out for awhile in the central mountain *massif* of France (around Clermont-Ferrand) but they will never cross the Loire again. From now on the Battle of France will be the battle for the frontiers of Belgium, Luxemburg, and Germany, plus the battle for the annihilation of the Fifteenth German Army if it ventures to stick it out around the "robot-coast."

It is perfectly clear that German resistance could not withstand our dazzling operations, except in the Falaise-Argentan pocket where the enemy was cornered and fought back fiercely, and in the great ports—Toulon, Marseilles, Brest, St. Malo. The rest of France was practically undefended for the simple reason that the Germans did not have enough men in the west.

The role of the French Forces of the Interior in these operations was important. The FFI almost captured Paris single-handed. The help of regulars from the outside was necessary, however, to liquidate the remaining German resistance in Paris. In connection with the flair-up of insurrection in Warsaw, the Soviet press wrote that the experience of the entire war shows that great cities and powerful centers of enemy resistance have never been captured by irregulars alone, although said irregulars (partisans or guerrillas) play a very important role in such captures.

ON THE day Paris was liberated, Rumania made its acrobatic *salto mortale*. On August 26 the Rumanian operational communique was already writing of "*full cooperation with our great allies*," etc. The decision of Rumania to climb aboard was primarily prompted by the terrific blow struck by Marshal Malinovsky and General Tolbukhin at Jassy and Kishinev. The breakthrough was of such overwhelming force that twelve enemy divisions were pocketed and surrounded southwest of Jassy and are now being exterminated. Swiftly the Soviet troops gained in a southerly direction, on the approaches to the Galatz-Fokshani Gap, covering Bucharest and Ploesti. Now these two strongholds have been captured and it is not impossible that Soviet troops will be in Bucharest in a very few days.

Now, when a front is held by mixed troops of two nationalities, such as Germans and Rumanians, the "change of heart" of the weaker one causes a military situation which those who have not experienced or witnessed it can hardly appreciate. On Thursday the Rumanian soldiers are fighting against the "hated Bolsheviks" alongside the "saviors of humanity." On Friday they are being told to fight against the "scourge of humanity" alongside "our glorious allies." What are Rumanians to think? Naturally, the King's reversal cannot sink in quickly into the Rumanian soldiers' consciousness. Furthermore, the Germans and some fascist Rumanian commanders may have kept the order from their troops. The result is that the Rumanian army is most certainly split into three categories: one category fights against the Germans, another still fights for the Germans and the third (and probably largest) simply blocks the roads, wandering aimlessly, trying to surrender to anybody who is ready to take care of them. The rotten Rumanian political regime was never able to build up a good army. Such an army must, in my opinion, feel the impact of the reversal very painfully and its discipline must be almost completely gone. Thus, it is obvious to me that it would be much easier for the Red Army if the Rumanian army were not there to block the communications and mess up things. But this cannot be done, so the best must be made of a trying situation. It is probable that the Soviet High Command is now trying to shunt the Rumanian army off the main "avenue," i.e., the Fokshani-Bucharest road to the passes of the Transylvanian Alps where the Rumanians can fight the Hungarians for the Transylvanian Plateau.

There is little doubt that there is an almost complete disintegration of the German front in the Balkans. The Germans might as well forget about anything that is east, southeast, and south of the Carpathians and the Middle Danube, just as they might forget about everything that is west, southwest, and south of the Rhine and Switzerland.

The Battle for the "Inner Fortress Germania" is about to begin.

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I GIVE YOU MY WORD . . . by JOSEPH NORTH

PARIS DATELINE

It is as though New York had been overrun by the enemy, and then one summer's day, the men and women of Chelsea, of Greenpoint, of Williamsburgh, of Washington Heights, hot with long-repressed fury, battled their way down the avenues, across the bridges, over Times Square to oust the *Uebermensch* from his last pillboxes, say, at Cooper Union, at Trinity Church, in the ferry slips at the Battery. For the Place de la Bastille is as much ours as Madison Square Park; the Arc de Triomphe as the Washington Monument. And so the old, beloved names leap out of the pages toward you like the dear names in a letter from home. For spiritually, to most of mankind, Paris was home.

For a long time I've mistrusted the cartographer's art: his image of reality went increasingly askew as this war roared on. He could only chart territory—the city, the river, the hill—when truth required depicting the heart, the mind, the will. And so for four endless years we saw France shaded the same deadly gray as Germany: the map-makers could never draw the great, throbbing heart of France—the Maquis, the Franc Tireur, the little peasant woman on bicycle trundling past the Gestapo with her bundle of the underground press. And so to many, surprise commingled with boundless joy when we read of the arrogant Prussian scurrying down the maple-lined streets as the aroused citizenry, by the hundreds of thousands, converged from all the *arrondissements*. Louis XVI heard those footsteps in 1789; Louis Phillippe in 1830; Bismarck in 1871. Paris occupied was never synonymous with Paris conquered.

Those who knew the French, knew the Parisian, never doubted. It is quiet today in the inquisitor's chamber of the Gestapo; the screams have died down and the bloodstains are scrubbed clean. But even when the streamlined rack and screw hummed twenty-four hours a day, we knew it could not torture the heart of Paris into treason. Who, having listened, could ever forget the shabbily dressed crowds in the Velodrome chanting, in 1937, *Avions pour l'Espagne*. Nor could I ever forget young Henri Dumont, of St. Denis, who would talk to me endlessly of the eternal art of Charlot Chaplin and of *le jazz hot*—who died in the Aragon foothills shattered by a Franco bullet. Nor can I forget his brother in the workingclass suburb of Paris to whom I brought Henri's last letter. There, in the whitewashed, modest rooms six flights up, decorated only by the posters of Republican Spain and Popular Front France, they spoke their faith in the people, in the deathless courage and enlightenment of their folk, and they did not weep. This faith was bred in them from birth, in the very air they breathed. The tradition of all peoples is epic: nations are lost only when they repudiate that tradition. The French trusted theirs. Hadn't Danton thundered in 1793 before the Legislative Assembly: "Every man who wishes to call himself a Frenchman must stand by the people. It is the people that brought us forth. We are not its fathers, we are its children. Every Frenchman must be armed at least with a pike."

It is to our eternal glory that we helped arm the descendants of Danton today: that we helped with more than a "pike." Our stout-hearted troops—ours, the British, the Russians—understood the meaning of the eternal words *liberte, egalite, fraternite*. And the alliance of free men operates at maximum in a war of liberation. Our troops enabled the French Forces of the Interior to strike the blow that thundered across the world. All free men helped free Paris. And I'm certain that Henri Dumont's brother would agree with that. I can see him and his family (if the Gestapo hadn't reached them first) standing among those John O'Reilly, of the *Herald Tribune*, described in his frontline dispatch last week: "Heavy rain fell this morning as the French armored units moved up, but this afternoon the sun was shining, and the thousands of French civilians stood cheering and throwing flowers as the tanks rolled by. American and French troops were cheered with equal zeal, although the sight of the French flags on the tanks of the 2d Armored Division caused the civilians to dance with joy." Yes, Henri's family threw roses at our boys, but their hearts almost burst when they saw the tanks of the Second lumber ahead with the tri-color across the parapets.

The infinite pride of the Frenchman required that he have a hand in his own liberation: he would not have it otherwise. Nor would we. And though the gray tide of the Nazi rolled across his land, the spirit of France was not drowned. The patriots met in the cellars, in the schoolrooms, in the churches: the men of different parties, different religions, drew together, labored anonymously, heroically, together. And that, I believe, is the great triumph of France.

Many have, this past week, written on the liberation of Paris, reiterated its significance. I want to make but one point in this piece: the Committee of Liberation represented *all* men who loved their country; and France, whose sages —Diderot, Rousseau, Marat—taught us much, can teach us much again. France fell because, in 1940, her sons were divided; France, in 1944, is rising because her sons are united. There will be those who will strive to undermine this unity, but the alerted people of France—of the world—will frustrate them.

The French underground leader who came to the microphone breathlessly over BBC last week told how the secret armies prevented the Germans "from turning the city into a fortress." The seemingly innocent pedestrian—this student, that artisan, this policeman, that lady with a shopping bag—observed where Nazis laid mines and passed word on to their brothers in the French Forces of the Interior (liberals, conservatives, Communists), who attacked the Germans, frustrated their plans. Von Kluge captured some of the patriots, the underground leader said, and addressing himself to the Nazi in his broadcast he declared: "I can imagine what you have been able to do to them. But just wait. We shall do as much to you. . . . You wormed your way into our ranks. You put the evidence you got through a sieve. But through all that, the arms, the documents, got through."

(*Continued on page* 31)

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OPA ON A TIGHTROPE

By LEE WILLIAMS

WHILE Congress, again plagued by the false issue of states' rights, was haggling last week over who should see to it that millions of Americans, caught in the change-over from war production to peacetime economy, will not starve, another less sensational but equally important phase of the reconversion puzzle was being studied at the Office of Price Administration. Chester Bowles and his staff of economists and lawyers were making up their minds what kind of prices are going to be paid for the goods our plants will turn out when the change-over is completed and the factories are turning out mechanical ice boxes, FM radios, automobiles, vacuum cleaners, and baby carriages instead of jeeps, bazookas, landing craft, and K rations.

Obviously such a decision was vital and was overdue. The battle against inflation will be less than half won even when the Allied army chiefs meet in Berlin and the rising sun has set over Tokyo. Inflation with its cortege of starvation, falling wages and repression of progress is not so much the companion of war, but is rather a camp follower, feeding on the offal of war, sometimes months after hostilities have ceased, sometimes years.

After formal war had been called off in 1918, for instance, there was a slight deflation in November and December which induced the American government to throw overboard what slight price controls it had established. By January 1919, the upward spiral had begun, and by May 1920, lumber prices were up 123.4 percent, coal 70.5, furniture 62.9, poultry 11.3, and meat 13.8.

There is no doubt except in the most partisan anti-New Deal minds, that price control will have to be retained for a considerable period after the war. But what kind of controls and at what levels?

There are two schools of economic thought among the price fixers. Group I holds that America's situation when this war ends will be a parallel to 1919-20 and that only most rigid controls will save us from serious trouble. Group II declares that the situation is vastly different from 1919. They say we are well stocked with inventories; that our productive capacity will prevent serious inflation by absorbing purchasing power; that labor must be given an adjustment in basic wages to compensate for the rise in the cost of living since wages were frozen by the Little Steel formula, and that manufacturers must be given a fair profit if they are to pitch in and get the wheels of peacetime economy turning.

It appeared that Bowles, with Assistant President Byrnes and Stabilizer Vinson as a most interested audience, was becoming a tightrope walker with the abyss of inflation on one side and the slough of unemployment on the other. For, if the factory owners saw no profit in pushing for immediate full production on a scale unheard of in America before the war, it appeared certain that millions of working men and women would be walking the streets looking for jobs not very long after the echoes of the peace salutes had died away.

Bowles accepted his role of tightrope walker with the grace with which his years in the advertising business have blessed him in meeting new situations. He recognized that there would not be a "meeting of minds" among the two schools of thought, but that something would have to be done. So he reached into his bag of resources and pulled out a pamphlet. It is to be a neat little job with things spelled out in the simplest language and with charts illustrating what has happened to prices and what must be done now. The climax of the pamphlet will be the reconversion formula he has pulled out of his bag.

AS BOWLES ventured out on the tightrope he had his attention fixed on three main factors: (1) There must be no general increase in the cost of living; (2) full use must be made of all our productive capacity; and (3) above all, wages (basic wage rates) must be kept at their present level.

Bowles' advertising experience came in handy on point one—the cost of living item. On paper it looked good. But an analysis of his reasoning shows the following fallacies. (1) He takes the Little Steel formula figure of fifteen percent as representing the increase in the cost of living since January 1941, when even the Bureau of Labor Statistics' cost of living index (thoroughly discredited even among government economists since the President's cost of living committee led by labor union members exposed its shortcomings) sets the increase at 24.4 percent. (2) He completely overlooks the carefully documented study of cost of living increases made by the CIO and AFL, which shows the increase to be 45.3 percent. (It is a fact that the studies made by Bowles' own price divisions in rent, clothing, food, etc., show increases above the fifteen percent he blandly adopts as his justification for not having rolled back these prices and for now completely giving up any attempt to lower them.) The same basic fallacy underlines the Bowles reasoning on point two—full use of all the country's productive capacity. It looks good on paper but the Bowles consideration of factors to bring such a desirable result about includes only a fair profit for manufacturers. Nothing is said about increasing labor forces to absorb the unemployed. Bowles admits that overtime payments will drop to practically nothing after the war. This will take $12,000,000,000 a year, 13.4 percent of all wages, out of workers' pay envelopes, on the basis of 1943 overtime payments. Yet under his explanations of point three—basic wages must be kept at their present levels—he says nothing about increasing basic wage rates to make up for this $12,000,000,000 loss of overtime and he says not a word about adjusting workers' pay envelopes upward to take care of the forty-five percent increase in the cost of living.

In other words, according to the Bowles philosophy, there has been no increase in the cost of living and the workers can take another $12,000,000,000 loss in earnings without feeling it and continue to buy goods in such volume that our factories will be humming night and day (without overtime of course) to keep up with this demand for consumer goods from the public.

IN JUSTICE to Bowles it must be pointed out that his field is prices not wages, and his little pamphlet will go on to formulate a program for pricing during the transition period and through the first period of peace. In brief his program provides for: (1) partial reconversion where only a part of the productive capacity of an industry is removed from war production to making things for the American home, and (2) full recon-

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version of a given industry. In the former case the new OPA theory works like this: If the overall profits of a company are above pre-war profits and part of the company's capacity is still being used for war production, the prices of the new civilian products which are to be made in the other part of the plant must remain at levels of 1940-41. If the overall profit picture of the company is such that a genuine hardship would be imposed by maintaining these levels for the partial reconversion, and the overall profits would drop below pre-war levels, then an adjustment upward in prices would be granted. The electric iron prices recently worked out are an example of this formula. Eighty-five percent of the producers, OPA says, declared they were willing to make electric irons at 1941 prices. So, with a few exceptions in the low price field where smaller companies are struggling to keep in the market against the big manufacturers, the ceilings adopted by OPA are at 1941 levels.

For complete reconversion of a given industry OPA has adopted this formula —1942 costs, plus increases in materials costs, plus increases (direct and indirect) in labor costs. Or put another way, present factory cost plus 1939 profit margins. Again this looks good on paper. But the techniques of producers in figuring costs and in other items of bookkeeping have long been a cause, familiar to price experts, of a gradual creeping upward of prices. It all depends on how the formulae are applied. Guesses in Washington indicate that the prices for automobiles, mechanical refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, etc., will be up from twenty to thirty-five percent above 1941 levels.

Asked by one assistant how the working man, whose "basic wage" is to remain the same, whose overtime is to be dropped to the tune of $12,000,000,000 and whose cost of living has gone up forty-five percent, can afford to buy a vacuum cleaner that costs a third again as much as his old one, Bowles is reported to have replied that vacuum cleaners do not appear on the cost of living index.

"Figure from Soviet Asia," by William Gropper

AT ANY rate a start has been made on reconversion pricing. The prices doubtless will be satisfactory to manufacturers and will aid in getting heavy industry back into mass production in time to absorb at least some of the unemployment that will follow cancellation of war contracts on a wholesale basis unless Washington planning is greatly speeded. And there is one other factor in the reconversion price picture which may work out to benefit the consumer to an extent not generally dreamed of. Sources close to heavy industry say that there is a tremendously effective weapon against inflation in the country's huge aviation industry. It is a young, aggressive industry, not bound by old ideas and not reluctant to invade new fields. It is stated on good authority that the reason, for instance, that the electric iron manufacturers were willing to accept 1941 prices as the base selling level for their new products, was the fear that the aviation industry was about to invade the electric iron field.

This same authority dares the low-priced auto industry to raise their prices too high. "Let the maker of a car that sold before the war for $800 try and put it back on the market after the war for $1,200," he says. "Inside of a few months you'll be hearing about a new car produced by aviation companies that sells for $750." There may be something in it. There certainly is something in the idea of providing price ceilings for consumer durables that will entice the manufacturers into speedy reconversion.

It's not heartening to see the casual way in which the cost of living ruckus has been passed off here. But labor is making a battle on that issue before the National War Labor Board. It's pretty generally agreed that something will be worked out to break the Little Steel formula.

But the overpowering thing that impresses a wanderer through the nation's economic planning agencies is this—it appears that nobody has begun to think in the terms of the postwar agreements worked out among the USSR, Great Britain, and the United States. Hardly anywhere can one find any serious thinking about the tremendous markets that would be opened to America, should we work out some real plan of mass employment which would assure work for everybody who wants to work, and a profit fair enough for any reasonable manufacturer because of the huge volume of sales. Certainly there's no such thought among those working out our price ceiling structure for the postwar period. Their horizons seem to be limited to a moderate level of employment and almost exclusively to the domestic market.

Here is a job for labor and the progressives, again.

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MISSOURI TVA

By WILLIAM SENTNER

Mr. Sentner is international vice president of the United Radio, Electrical, and Machine Workers-CIO.

St. Louis.

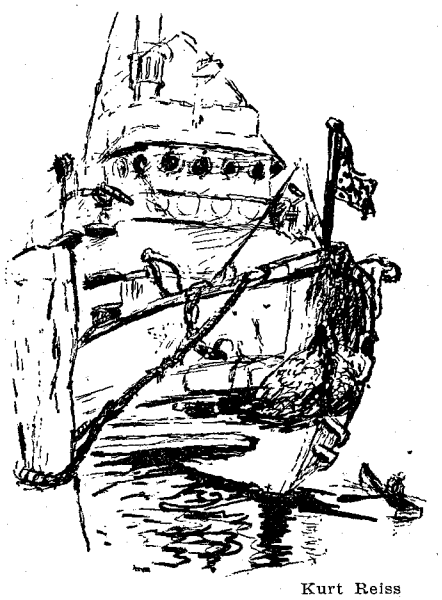
DISTRICT 8 of the United Radio, Electrical and Machine Workers-CIO has issued a pamphlet about a river. What interest can a CIO union, busy with problems of war production, conversion and postwar employment and security, have in the Missouri River? District 8 says this is the very reason it is interested. Its pamphlet, *One River—One Plan*, is a story about a river that runs through nine states, embraces more than 530,000 square miles of land and intimately concerns 7,000,000 human beings. It tells of a mighty giant that has been working against the people; that has caused floods, soil erosion, poverty and destruction. District 8, aware of the fact that this river has tremendous possibilities for farm prosperity, jobs for service men and demobilized war workers and for increasing the income of hundreds of thousands of citizens in the Missouri Valley, has asked our Congress to establish a Missouri Valley Authority.

In the past, half-hearted, piecemeal attempts have been made to control the Missouri River by chopping it up into various problems and assigning either government or state agencies to work on navigation, or on irrigation, or flood control, or soil conservation. This never worked. Various interests quarrelled while the river went on in the same old destructive way. To harness the Missouri River and to provide unified control means that dams will be built for flood control—and this very same water will be used to generate hydro-electric power. It means that dry and dusty farm land, long deprived of enough water to grow successful crops, will be put to use by irrigation. It means that our rivers will be made more navigable. It means soil conservation, reforestation, scientific farming, and increased recreational opportunities on the land. It means that all this will be accomplished by one big agency working for the good of all the people. And it means jobs and more jobs for the people.

District 8 in its pamphlet points out: "To build this plan would provide jobs for at least 100,000 men for five years. In addition, materials to be produced for this construction will employ tens of thousands of persons in the service trades, business, and heavy electrical equipment. Under an MVA more than 600,000 farms will be receiving electric service for the first time. This would mean jobs for 5,000 men for over six years manufacturing line equipment. Another 3,000 men would find steady employment for four years in construction of these new lines. Thousands of additional workers would be needed in mining, processing, and the other industrial work connected with the extracting and handling of raw materials for this equipment."

In the field of home and farm electrical appliances, District 8 estimates that $2,500,000,000 dollars will be spent for home and farm equipment over a five year period. This means a very minimum of 50,000 jobs for seven years in the home and farm electrical appliance industry. The pamphlet points out that this is only a beginning in the electrical field. Thousands of schools, churches, and stores in small towns would want electrical appliances and equipment. And it must be noted that cheap power attracts new industries. This is an opportunity to bring permanent industrial jobs and wealth to the valley.

DOWN Missouri way, this pamphlet is gaining an excellent reputation. The *Post-Dispatch*, a leading St. Louis newspaper, digested the pamphlet for its editorial page and also gave it prominent coverage in the news section. The *Star-Times*, St. Louis evening paper, commented editorially: "More and more of this educational work is needed." David Lilienthal, chairman of the Tennessee Valley Auhority, said: "The development of the Missouri Valley in the interest of its people is a matter that is primarily for the people in that far flung region to decide for themselves. . . . It therefore encourages me very much, and I think should encourage every citizen, that the membership of organized labor in the Missouri Valley should have studied and discussed this very matter." Mrs. Roosevelt, long interested in socially constructive projects, has written UE vice president William Sentner: "I think something along the lines you suggest would be very constructive and hope you succeed." Representatives of industry in the valley have expressed their interest in this UE publication and varied industries have requested copies of *One River—One Plan*.



Kurt Reiss

It is encouraging that this issue, of vital importance to the valley and to the entire nation, is gaining widespread interest and attention. Senator James Murray of Montana, one of the nine states through which the river runs, recently introduced a bill in Congress to establish a Missouri Valley Authority. The purpose of the Murray bill, which is patterned after the legislation establishing TVA, is to provide one unified authority over the Missouri River.

District 8 has sent Senator Murray a public letter of praise stating that: "The valley has long been in dire need of a man of the stature and compassion of the Honorable Senator Norris to champion the problems of this valley. That this need now promises to be most adequately satisfied is indeed gratifying to the plain people of the valley. . . . This is the type of broad planning that is needed throughout our land to satisfy the needs of demobilized war workers and service men. This is the type of thinking our great country needs to keep the wheels of production turning and to open new frontiers of social planning and prosperity. This is the type of action that will guarantee our farmers an end to poverty and devastation of their land. This is the type of action that will allow us to reap the full benefits of our victory over fascism and tyranny."

The fight for a Missouri Valley Au-

(*Continued on page 26*)

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MAKING OUR ECONOMY WORK

ALAN R. SWEEZY Reviews Browder's "Teheran"

TEHERAN, *by Earl Browder. International Publishers. 35¢.*

THIS book is based on the premise that we are going to have capitalism in the United States, Great Britain, and many other countries for a long time to come. The majority of people are not ready for socialism and to try to force the issue of socialism would be to split the progressive forces and play into the hands of our common enemy, fascism. The task for the visible future is thus to find a progressive solution to the problem of making capitalism work.

This problem can be broken down into two parts: (1) the "technical" problem of economic and political organization, and (2) the problem of social attitudes. The latter is probably the more difficult of the two. We know enough about the way our economic system works to indicate, at least in broad outline, the kind of policies we must follow to maintain full employment and production. And we have had enough experience in the art of government to devise whatever political machinery, national or international, may be necessary to give effect to our decisions. The real difficulties lie in the field of social attitudes. If enough people who are in a position to exert an influence on the course of events want peace and prosperity, and if they are willing to submerge their special interests and their special prejudices in a common effort to attain these goals, we can have peace and prosperity in the years ahead. If, on the other hand, the different groups in our society approach the tasks ahead of us in a spirit of conflict and short-sighted self-interest we will soon find ourselves in a state of national and international anarchy even more dangerous than that of the twenties and thirties.

The author's plea for unity is no mere matter of sentiment. It is rather an appeal to enlightened self-interest. This is true in both the international and domestic spheres. There is no more dangerous poison in international relations than the assumption that a nation in pursuing its own national interest must necessarily come into conflict with the interests of other nations. This latter attitude is well illustrated by many of the comments on the recent international monetary conference at Bretton Woods. Critics were alarmed lest the United States make too many "concessions" to other countries. The alleged concessions actually were without exception measures which would help to increase American exports and also, if Americans chose to use the purchasing power thus obtained, American imports. How this could possibly hurt the United States the critics never attempted to explain. In the thirties it was commonly assumed that collective security was in some way a peculiarly "Russian" policy and hence necessarily in conflict with our own national interest. The tragic results of that mistake are too well known to require further elaboration.

In our domestic affairs there are, of course, bound to be disagreements and disputes. It would be silly to pretend that labor and management can get along in perfect harmony, or that farmers and city dwellers will always see issues of national policy in the same light. These conflicts will not always be easy to resolve. But the essential thing is that they can be resolved within the framework of an orderly and peaceful society if all those concerned keep in mind the fact that they have common interests that are bigger and more important than their disagreements. All of the groups in our society, workers, farmers, business men, and professional people are interested in prosperity, in health and security, in mutual tolerance, in greater educational opportunities—to mention only the most important and most obvious of their common interests. What we need in domestic as in international affairs is a shift in the focus of our attention from the sources of irritation and dispute to the more important things on which we can agree.

This whole thesis rests, of course, on the assumption that a progressive solution to the economic problems of capitalism is possible. Without such a possibility all the good-will in the world would be of no avail. As an economist, I am convinced not only that the capitalist economy can be made to work but also that the only way it can be done is through the further development of progressive policies of the New Deal type. From this it follows that, in the modern world, the interests of progressives, which are the interests of the great majority of people, far from being opposed to the interests of the capitalists, are actually identical with them. It is this fact that gives progressives their unique opportunity in the period ahead. In the nineteenth century the progressives were necessarily cast in the role of critics. It was their function to win concessions from the capitalists for the great mass of workers and consumers in the form of factory inspection laws, minimum wages and maximum hours, social insurance schemes, regulation of monopoly, etc. In the modern world their role has changed fundamentally. They can no longer limit themselves to defending the special interests of the less privileged groups in society. It is their responsibility to provide the impetus necessary to keep the whole economic system working successfully.

This change in the position of the progressive forces arises out of the change that has occurred in the underlying conditions of economic activity. Our economy can no longer rely, as it did in the nineteenth century, on a rapidly expanding volume of private investment expenditure to keep the total flow of purchasing power at a satisfactory level. A larger part of the income stream must be channeled into the hands of the people who will spend it on consumer goods and services. As Prof. Alvin Hansen has well expressed it, our economy must become a "high consumption economy," instead of the high saving and investment economy it has been in the past. But it can become a high consumption economy only through the adoption of progressive policies which have the effect of increasing the purchasing power, and at the same time the well-being, of the great majority of the people.

This is, to my mind, the true economic meaning of the New Deal. Many of the New Dealers themselves were surprised and even startled to find themselves shouldered with the tremendous responsibility of making the economy work. Some of those who had long fought for progressive causes found it hard to realize that they were no longer merely an

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opposition group fighting for concessions. But for all of its hesitations and shortcomings, the New Deal stands out among similar movements in other countries for the remarkable way in which it did measure up to its unprecedented responsibilities.

MR. BROWDER has a clear understanding of the essential nature of the problem of making the capitalist economy work. "There remains no way by which the American economy can possibly continue to function unless it finds a way to distribute its products more generally and generously among the masses of producers. This goal cannot be achieved through the normal operations of 'free enterprise.' It would be unprofitable for any private enterprise to work on that basis, unless and until all enterprises did the same. It can be realized, therefore, only to the degree that it can be enforced generally as a public policy, with the powers of government behind it. It can be accomplished within the forms of 'free enterprise,' but not by reliance upon the initiative of the private enterpriser."

The most difficult question that arises in connection with a program of increasing consumer purchasing power is the proper role of wage policy. This may at first sight seem strange. If the object is to increase purchasing power why not do it, it may be asked, by raising wages? This is, in fact, the method Mr. Browder suggests. If it would work, it would have the great advantage of appealing to the common sense of the ordinary person and also of being in line with labor's natural strivings. Unfortunately, the matter is not quite so simple. Wages are not only income to the workers who receive them but they are also direct production costs to the business concerns that hire the workers. Raising wages, in the absence of other changes, increases costs as much as it increases receipts and thus leaves business without any incentive to expand. This was one of the basic defects in the NRA as a recovery measure. It was not until an "outside" source of additional consumer purchasing power in the form of government deficit spending made its appearance that recovery really got under way. What is required is some method of increasing consumer incomes which will not at the same time directly raise business costs. This means that the money that goes to consumers must be borrowed from savers, or created by the banks, or taxed after it has reached the stage of net profit or individual income. And it also means that socially acceptable channels for getting the money to consumers must be found. WPA did the job in the emergency of the thirties. In the future it is to be hoped that, instead of waiting for an emergency, we will work out a permanent solution through public works, housing, health, and educational expenditures and through a substantial government contribution to the financing of social security benefits.*

There is the further difficulty in connection with wage policy that in any individual case it is impossible to draw an exact dividing line between wage increases made possible by increasing productivity, which are in every way beneficial, and wage increases which raise costs in a way to limit or discourage business expansion. A great deal thus depends in practice on how intelligent and reasonable the representatives of both labor and management are in their wage negotiations.

Although the author correctly appraises the fundamental nature of our economic problem he, fortunately, overestimates its magnitude somewhat. From the fact that the war is now absorbing at least half our productive effort he concludes that we will have to find *new* markets after the war is over equal in magnitude to half our present national income, i.e., roughly 85 to 90 billion dollars. But this estimate overlooks two things: first, consumers are now being restricted in many ways in the amount of goods they can buy. If their incomes were as large in peacetime as they are now, they would spend a considerably larger proportion of them than they are now spending on consumer goods. Thus, part—but only part, of course—of the new markets we would need to maintain our present level of income would be automatically provided by the expansion of consumer buying. The second point is that the $180,000,000,000 figure we hear so frequently these days in connection with the national income is gross, not net. The gross amount is appropriate for war purposes, since replacement of capital equipment can be neglected to a large extent while the war lasts and certain other deductions important in peace need not now be made. But the net national income is the relevant figure for peacetime and that would probably be nearer 150 than 180 billion dollars.

This does not, of course, change the essential character of the problem. Even allowing for the somewhat lower national income figure and for the expansion of consumer spending once wartime restrictions are removed there is likely to be a considerable gap between income and consumption, which private investment is quite unlikely to be able to fill by itself. It will probably be necessary to have a net government contribution to income of anywhere from five to fifteen billion dollars a year to maintain reasonably full employment and production. In view of the difficulties we had providing a net contribution of $3,000,000,000 in the thirties, that ought to be enough for any one!

My comments on the economic sections of the book would not be complete without mention of the author's admirably realistic, balanced treatment of the cartel problem. This is a subject on which there is a great deal more heat than light in most current discussion. Most writers are all for abolishing cartels, trusts, and other monopolistic organizations forthwith. Amidst all this heroic tilting at windmills it is refreshing to read a calm and sensible discussion of how we are going to live with the business giants of the modern world, as live we must, if we are going to work out our problems within the framework of the present economic system.

Edith Glaser

* Social security is particularly important in this connection. I have treated this subject at greater length in "Social Security and National Prosperity," *Science and Society*, Summer, 1944.

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TWILIGHT OF A LIBERAL

By SENDER GARLIN

FOR many years the name Oswald Garrison Villard was an honored one in that twilight area known as "liberal circles." The grandson of the Abolitionist editor, William Lloyd Garrison, and the son of Henry Villard, Civil War correspondent who accompanied Abraham Lincoln on his campaign tour (and who later became a power in the Northern Pacific Railway), Oswald Garrison Villard had, to employ Van Wyck Brooks' phrase, "a useable tradition." The beneficiary of a comfortable family inheritance, Mr. Villard was able for many years to indulge in the luxury of covering the deficits of the old pre-Social-Democratic New York *Post* which he owned, and of the *Nation*, of which he was long the publisher and editor. At no time could it be said that Mr. Villard displayed the zeal for social change that characterized his Abolitionist grandfather. ("I am in earnest; I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; and I will be heard.") Nonetheless, as editor of the *Nation* Villard's name came to be associated with a type of political journalism which, with all its limitations, was a positive force in American life.

Mr. Villard, who likes to regard himself as a "crusading editor," has long manifested a clinical interest in the American press. In his latest volume* he has brought his previous study (*Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, 1923) up to date, and has set down his views of American newspapers, publishers, and editors of the past and present. This book will be a shock to progressive-minded readers not because of what it says or fails to say about the techniques of American newspapers, publishers, and editors, but insofar as Mr. Villard reveals his position on political issues—issues which are inextricably linked with the *techniques* of these publications. It need not to be argued that it is impossible to discuss the contemporary press in a political vacuum. Thus, Mr. Villard's eminence as a publisher or editor cannot successfully be used to conceal his present dangerous views. If this sounds strident and unjust let us consider *The Disappearing Daily:*

Not even from the anonymous heroes of the pen who boldly sign their ardent communications "Constant Reader," "100 Percent American," and "Anti-FDR" has the New York *Daily News*, in its "Voice of the People" column, received such uninhibited praise as from Mr. Villard's new book. Mr. Villard applauds the pro-fascist *Daily News* because "it has never been afraid to face government opposition and attack in its challenge of what it considers the wrongful acts and policies of the New Deal and of Franklin Roosevelt." Indeed, says the author, the *Daily News* "could have gone much further in this direction with truth and could have attacked even more vigorously than it has." He declares that "no one can truthfully claim" that the *Daily News* "favors the Germans, and it certainly hates the Japanese." According to Mr. Villard, the pro-Nazi orientation of the *Daily News* "seems just the work of an editor who has not lost his head or discarded his judgment in this crisis, who continues to pass upon issues with peacetime detachment and unbiased scrutiny of what is going on."

THE former *Nation* editor seems almost as detached as the *Daily News* publisher, Capt. Joseph M. Patterson, else he might have taken note of the recent *affaire* Heizer Wright; he might have recalled—as he penned his tribute to the *Daily News*—that that newspaper, three weeks before the sneak Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, let it be known that "Of all the Oriental peoples, the Japanese are nearly like us. . . . They are physically clean . . . think baseball is a fine game . . . are fiercely patriotic, whereas most Orientals are not. . . . It is against these people that our war hawks are proposing that we fight a war. The Japanese don't want to fight us. They have gone to the length of Clippering a special envoy over here to make another bid for peace." Mr. Villard writes of the *Daily News* that "still the circulation grows, despite the foolish charge that the paper is disloyal, if not treasonable, and the increase in price."

Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, chief Nazi propagandist, doesn't think it's a "foolish charge." The Hitler crowd, in fact, makes no attempt to conceal its unbounded affection for the American newspaper axis. A short-wave radio report broadcast from Berlin in English at 5:28 PM on Aug. 21, 1942, carried the following testimonial, according to the official US report: "Berlin, commenting on the 'so-called free press of America' today, cited the Chicago *Tribune*, the New York *Daily News*, and the Washington *Times-Herald* as typical examples of what the American press was up against under Roosevelt's dictatorship. . . . These newspapers, being true American papers and representing the majority of the American people, are being persecuted by the Roosevelt administration even to being accused as saboteurs of the war effort."

LIBERAL admirers of Mr. Villard should be put on notice that he says of the owner and publisher of the pro-fascist *Daily News* that ". . . Mr. Patterson's contribution to American journalism and to the welfare of New York City is a highly important one." Mr. Villard evidently fails to see the *Daily News'* service to the pro-Hitler cause in this country, but he is beside himself with admiration for Captain Patterson's paper because "it no longer plays up the nude female form, and does not give us . . . horrible portrayals of crimes and battle scenes. . . ." He is irked by the way in which President Roosevelt conducts his press conferences (the real reason, of course, is that he doesn't approve of his policies—foreign or domestic). He recalls that the President "so far forgot himself" as to ask a newspaper friend of the *Daily News'* John O'Donnell to present that correspondent with a German Iron Cross. Mr. O'Donnell, Villard says, "has earned the especial dislike of Mr. Roosevelt because of his searching criticism of the President himself, his administration, his policies and inconsistencies." Yet Mr. Roosevelt singled out O'Donnell for that Iron Cross. Villard wouldn't say, would he, that O'Donnell is only a "critic" of the Roosevelt administration? Can it be that the Nazis are so fond of "constructive criticism" of the Commander-in-Chief as to defend the American newspaper axis from what they term "Roosevelt's dictatorship"?

Mr. Villard has some of the sweetest things to say about "Cissie" Patterson's *cobra de capello*, the Washington

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* THE DISAPPEARING DAILY, *by Oswald Garrison Villard. Knopf. $3.50.*

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Times-Herald. He likes not only its make-up and type, but reports that "many seek the column of John O'Donnell, Mr. Roosevelt's pet hate among the correspondents. . . ." As for Eleanor Roosevelt, Mr. Villard finds her popular column, "My Day," to be "incredibly banal, mawkish, and disingenuous" and repeats Westbrook Pegler's stale slander that Mrs. Roosevelt "out-coins them all by virtue of her husband's office." Is it possible that Mr. Villard is unaware that the President's wife has publicly stated on countless occasions that the earnings from her column are devoted to charitable and war-service causes?

IN THE light of Mr. Villard's admiration for the New York *Daily News*, it will occasion no surprise to learn that he is equally enthusiastic, with minor qualifications, about the Chicago *Tribune*. That paper's publisher, Col. Robert R. McCormick, Villard proclaims, "has been placed in the position of defending the rights and liberties of the American press," although he acknowledges that the *Tribune* had endorsed the Ku Klux Klan. This is where Villard's "idealism" and pacifism have led him.

In similar mood is Villard's assertion that the labor-haters read Westbrook Pegler (not only labor-haters, unfortunately, since a large number of the 10,000,000 who read "Fair Enough" are victims of Pegler's union-busting campaigns). His final word on Roy Howard's journalistic goon is: "Whether Pegler is right or wrong, no one can question his moral and physical courage or his desire to serve his countrymen."

The Scripps-Howard papers under Roy Howard's direction find favor with Mr. Villard because of "their service in speaking out with vigor about the breakdown of the Roosevelt leadership, or rather lack of leadership, on the home front." But his ardor for the appeaser policy of this syndicate is somewhat dampened by Mr. Howard's practice of "featuring the female form" in his newspapers.

William Randolph Hearst doesn't come off as well in Mr. Villard's discussion of the press, but it is not because the Lord of San Simeon has used his newspaper chain to injure the cause of the United Nations by his open avowal of fascist causes. Rather, it is because in his youthful days he had "degraded" and "debased" the newspaper business. Social and political issues do not exist for the author, or are, at best, secondary.

Mr. Villard finds the New York *Times*' Hanson Baldwin's military and naval commentaries "unequalled," forgetting that one week after the Nazi attack upon the Soviet Union (June 29, 1941) Baldwin announced—after consulting his maps and boning up on the science of astrology—that the Russians, "in staff work and leadership, in training and equipment are no match for the Germans." Or that Baldwin, on July 4, 1941, set forth that "the Russians so far have shown no evidence that they can meet the Germans with equal force or equal skill. . . . Nor is there any prospect that as the fighting in Russia continues the situation will be reversed."

The US government's anti-monopoly prosecution of the Associated Press arouses Mr. Villard's indignation. He sees in this action against the AP merely an attempt to aid Marshall Field's Chicago *Sun*, "an organ largely created to advance the fortunes of Franklin Roosevelt and the Democratic Party."

Mr. Villard's book contains, of course, the customary dirge on the Pulitzers and their newspaper properties. Rewriting his earlier essays on Joseph Pulitzer and his sons, the author drops a tear or two for the late New York *World* in describing how that paper folded because of alleged mismanagement. But in his entire discussion he does not find space for a single line on the late Heywood Broun's courageous battle with Ralph Pulitzer over his famous column on the Sacco-Vanzetti frame-up.

Jewish friends of the Right have evidently obliged Mr. Villard with a prefabricated version of the *Forward*, organ of the Social Democratic Dubinsky clique, a newspaper which both in its politics and its journalistic technique is a good imitation of the Hearst press. One senses in reading Mr. Villard's encomiums that he is enamored of the *Forward* because it appears "exotic" to him. He is blind to everything else. True, here and there one gets oh so faint a hint that the *Forward* is something the Jewish workers would not be willing to die for, but basically Mr. Villard offers an elaborate apology for its betrayal of the cause of the people who helped found, establish and maintain the paper. Mr. Villard acknowledges that "the modern generation of Socialists" have taken exception to the *Forward's* anti-Soviet crusades, but his manner of reporting this fact is on the same Red-baiting level as the *Forward* itself. These Socialists, "with the exception of the followers of Norman Thomas," he says gayly, "have persistently attacked Stalin and Soviet Russia *for their cruelties and the wholesale murders of the Soviet Regime*." (My emphasis—S.G.)

This contemptible Valtinism is by no means a new tack for Villard. A frequent contributor to *The Progressive*, Wisconsin organ of the defeatists led by the brothers LaFollette, Villard declared, in its issue of June 7, 1943, that "human life counts for nothing in the Russia of today." If by "human life" he means Nazis, Villard is unquestionably correct!

Throughout *The Disappearing Daily*, Mr. Villard dwells on nebulous moral values. The words "editorial illumination" and "vision" recur again and again, and this liberalism, once a progressive element in American thought, is now a form of reactionary utopianism. Thus, he is willing to forgive anti-democratic policies in a newspaper provided it does not "succumb," as he puts it, to "the comics, the illustrations, the puzzles, the fiction, the sports news, and the personal gossip they paint." These popular features (doubtless their quality could be improved) Mr. Villard finds "trivial, banal, and vulgar."

IN HIS final chapter—on William Lloyd Garrison and his *Liberator*—Mr. Villard indites an apostrophe to journalists-without-money. He writes of these as "the freest and happiest of all the profession, bent only upon giving forth the deepest and best," and he asks rhetorically, "How many such are there today? Two, or three, or half a dozen?" In view of this passion for the "freest and happiest of all the profession," one wonders why Mr. Villard found no place in his chronicle for those newspapers and magazines — thunderers on the left — who for years have fought everything corrupt and decadent in the commercial press. Nor has he deigned even so much as to mention the virile and increasingly influential new trade union press of the CIO.

Mr. Villard's book is drenched with nostalgia. The author separates the American press from its social and economic roots, merely echoing the primitive cry that "the advertisers control." Advertisers or no advertisers, the issue today is: What is a given paper's approach to the war and the peace?

Mr. Villard was a member of America First in the early days of the organization. His current book, particularly in its praise of the defeatist-appeaser press, reveals that he is still wedded to many of the pernicious ideas that animated the group. There have been other such "liberals". . . .

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THE SUPREME COURT TODAY II

By LEONARD B. BOUDIN

This is the second article on the Supreme Court by Attorney Boudin. The first appeared in the August 29 issue of NEW MASSES.

THE study of the component parts of a multiple court is always interesting and occasionally revealing. In the present case it illumines the many differences among the individual justices and disposes of the attempt to dismiss the Court as a "New Deal" agency. There is, of course, a relatively cohesive group in the Court which almost invariably expresses its most progressive views: Black, Douglas, and Murphy. Its existence is alarming to those persons or organizations who were equally disturbed by the shining combination of Holmes and Brandeis. During the last two terms Black, Murphy, and Douglas have joined together alone eighteen times in dissent; on five occasions they were joined by Rutledge, once by Roberts, and once by Jackson.

The work of these justices has indicated a broad conception of federal power as against state power, a particularly strong concern for civil liberties and a sympathetic approach to social legislation. They have invariably given a deserved weight to the findings of administrative agencies including those carrying out the vast social and economic legislation of the thirties as well as the various old-line regulatory agencies. Where the Court has adopted a progressive approach in these matters, they have formed the bulwark of the majority; in most other cases they are found dissenting, sometimes with others, often alone.

Black is the leader of the group. As the President's first appointee to the bench, following the failure of the Court reorganization bill, he wrote several brilliant solitary dissents in his first term. His subjection to bitter attacks, including a surprising one from Marquis Childs, who should have known better, is an unpleasant episode in contemporary judicial history. Today, indisputably, the situation has changed; his judicial statesmanship is recognized by leaders of the bar and we find him more frequently than not a part of the Court's majority.

One aspect of his thinking stands out above the rest: his particular concern for the supremacy of federal over state power. Hence his solitary dissent in *C. J. Hendry Co.* vs. *Moore,* where he warned against state interference with maritime activity. His opinions on rate regulation, which caused attention to center upon him in his first term, are unequalled today in realistic understanding of this important community problem. In addition, one must mark his solicitude for the rights of workers under such labor legislation as the Jones Act, the Federal Employers' Liability Act and the Longshoremen Act. Many of the more important opinions of the Court on these subjects were written by Black.

Douglas, the youngest member of the bench, has joined Black in dissent thirty-five times during the last two terms of the Court. As the former head of a modern administrative agency, the Securities and Exchange Commission, he is admirably fitted to handle the many issues of administrative law which crowd the court's calendars. His forte, of course, is corporate reorganizations and bankruptcy, on which he has written many of the court's opinions. It is rather interesting to recall that his appointment was opposed by some liberals on the ground that he might be too well disposed to big business.

MURPHY, the last of the triumvirate, has evidenced a distinctive approach to judicial decision. He has frequently come forward to remind his colleagues that they were not giving sufficient protection to individual rights. This has occasionally found him with so strange an ally as Roberts. Thus Murphy wrote the dissenting opinion in *Endicott Johnson Corp.* vs. *Perkins,* opposing a subpoena issued by the Secretary of Labor in Walsh-Healey Act proceedings; there he warned against subjection "to unwarranted and ill-advised intrusions by the judicial branch of the government." Similarly, in the *National Broadcasting Co.* case he argued that the chain broadcasting regulations of the Federal Communications Commission exceeded its authority. In both cases, his concern for individual rights was undoubtedly misplaced.

One can find many cases in which Murphy has taken up with more reason the cudgels for civil liberty. His special dissent in the *McCann* case, for example, stated bluntly: "I do not concede that the right to a jury trial can be waived in criminal proceedings in the federal courts." Nor would a description of his views be adequate without reference to his deeply religious views and his concern for one other minority group, the Indians. His support of the Jehovah's Witnesses was based squarely upon their right to religious freedom, while the majority of the Court reached the same conclusion in reliance upon the broader ground of freedom of speech. His dissent in *Williams* vs. *State of North Carolina,* which recognized the validity of the Nevada divorce, was expressly predicated upon ". . . the marital relation, the formulation of standards of public morality in connection therewith and the supervision of domestic (in the sense of family) affairs. . . ." On the Indian question, it is well to recall his reminder of "the obligations of the United States toward a dependent people" and his criticism that "as a people our dealings with the Indian tribes have been too often marked by injustice, neglect and even ruthless disregard of their interests and necessities."

These three judges represent the most progressive group on the Supreme Court today. It is extremely difficult to categorize most of the others in broad terms because their positions depend upon the particular issues involved. Justice Roberts, alone, fits into the ultra-conservative niche. Rarely has a member of this tribunal so often dissented alone. He is against our administrative agencies, critical of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the National Labor Relations Act, and opposed to the Emergency Price Control Act. During the last three terms he has voted against the government in eight of twelve cases involving the NLRA, and

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for the employer in most of the cases involving the FLSA. He has voted against the Jehovah's Witnesses in most of the cases involving that sect. The last of the very conservative school that governed the Court for many years, over the protests of Holmes, Brandeis, Stone, and Cardozo, he has continued to fight—though now in vain—against progress on the Court.

The rest of the court falls into the middle, sometimes shifting one way, often another. To ascribe leadership here to this middle group is difficult, but if it is anyone's, it is Felix Frankfurter's. He is a man of unusual felicity of expression, vigorous views and extraordinary learning in the work and history of the Court. His brilliant writings in the fields of constitutional, labor, and administrative law had led us to hope that he would lead the liberal forces on the Court. He has, of course, written some of the Court's best opinions upholding the work of the administrative agencies. His were the opinions in the *Anderson* and *McNabb* cases, holding improper criminal convictions of union organizers and others based upon evidence unlawfully secured. But the co-author of *The Labor Injunction* wrote the court's opinion justifying that employer weapon in the famous *Meadowmoor* case, and its opinion upholding an anti-picketing law of Texas. It is difficult to accept the fact that during the last two terms he joined Roberts twenty-six times in dissent; only four times did he join Murphy, once Black, and three times Douglas. (In four of these instances the allying judges wrote separate opinions). He might be said to illustrate Justice Jackson's statement in his book, *The Judicial Power*, that "the Court influences appointees more consistently than appointees influence the Court." More probably, the Court has adopted Frankfurter's views which were markedly advanced in the nineteen-twenties, while he is unwilling or unable to change his sights in an advancing world.

THE remaining judges are also most easily assessed by the character of their dissents. Of them, Robert Jackson is most frequently allied with Frankfurter and there is a certain similarity in their incisive thinking. Jackson wrote the Court's opinion in the dangerous *Indiana and Michigan Electric Co.* case and the dissenting opinion in *Williams* vs. *North Carolina.* On the other hand, his opinion in *J. I. Case Co.* vs. *NLRB* will be remembered as a landmark in the twilight area where the individual and collective labor agreements meet. His concurring opinion in the *Edwards* case eloquently affirmed the right of the indigent to cross state lines. In *Bridges* vs. *California* he sustained the right of free speech and in *Duckworth* vs. *Arkansas* he warned against the "unwise extension of state power over interstate commerce." One finds him with Roberts or Frankfurter on matters involving the NLRB, the Jehovah's Witnesses and internal revenue; with Black or Douglas in asserting the supremacy of the national government; and alone when, as the public conscience, he protests against the acquittal of a Boss Pendergast from contempt charges or assails the informer actions.

"The Chief Justice," says Charles Evans Hughes, in his lectures on the Court, "as the head of the Court has an outstanding position, but in a small body of able men with equal authority in the making of decisions, it is evident that his actual influence will depend upon the strength of his character and the demonstration of his ability in the intimate relations of the judges." Harlan F. Stone is a man of firm democratic views who once stood alone in denying the validity of the compulsory flag salute. Finally, he was able to swing a majority of the Court behind him. It is of course very difficult to assess his actual influence upon his colleagues in view of their own intellectual power and firm convictions. But in a close Court with a liquid majority his views have more often prevailed than not. Rarely dissenting, he is found allied in that position only once during the last two years with Black, seventeen times with Roberts and thirteen with Frankfurter. This is of course a far cry from the nineteen-twenties, when his voice so frequently joined those of Holmes and Brandeis.

Rutledge, formerly on the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia, has participated in too few decisions to permit of definitive analysis. He will probably be found in the more progressive wing upon most issues. While on the lower court he had held invalid the flag salute requirements of local education boards; he continued to do so upon elevation to the Supreme Court. One of his first opinions, involving the rights of seamen under the Jones act, is an excellent exposition of the subject. In nine of his seventeen dissents during the last two years he has joined with either Black or Douglas.

Reed is an anomalous figure. During this and the last term he joined Black three times in dissent; his dissents on the opposing side numbered twenty-nine. Last term he was to be found with the dissenters urging the conviction of Jehovah's Witnesses. He was the sole dissent from the enlightened *Anderson* and *McNabb* opinions noted above. Yet, upon one subject, the National Labor Relations Act, he is almost always with the liberal coalition. In the original *Consolidated Edison* case he and Black alone voted to uphold the NLRB's invalidation of a collusive labor contract; had they prevailed, many of the ensuing industrial difficulties of that company would have been avoided. Since then he has written some of the Court's most important opinions on the subject. The explanation for his localized liberalism must lie in his intimate knowledge of the act. It will be recalled that as Solicitor General he successfully argued its constitutionality before the Court.

While I have emphasized the distinctions among the justices and the instances of dissent, there are, as indicated, many more decisions in which they have unanimously stated the law. In these and other cases their contributions have made an inspiring record. Without their support we should have today a narrowly construed Wage and Hour Law, a military machine hampered by technicalities, social legislation invalidated and administrative agencies crippled. The labor injunction would again be master of labor disputes and our national economic needs would be hampered by a failure to recognize the need of a strong central government.

The members of the Court are all lawyers of ability and men of the highest integrity. Their differences are many, but these are matters of law and policy, not of personality. There are no bitter feuds or prejudices such as those indulged in by the late Justice McReynolds in his heyday. This is a Court of men who have come from high posts in the executive and legislative branches of our state and national governments, who have studied the work of the Court more thoroughly, and, I think, understandingly than any group of their predecessors and who are, for the most part, aware of the myriad political and economic problems that must be solved for our future and that of the world. This is a democratic institution functioning at its highest level. We must protect it against the attacks, now looming before us, as we must protect all institutions of democracy.

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VENTURE IN BLACK AND WHITE

By IRIS BROWN BUAKEN

THIS is the story of a young man who dared. In typical American fashion, he pioneered to open new paths of encouragement and opportunity for all, he dared to discover great riches of comradeship and courage lying unclaimed in our land of free people of many racial strains. From Alabama to California, with ninety-eight cents his capital for a new career, came Howard Smith. He longed to learn how to fly. This yearning for the pilot's free-winging adventures was the young man's education for what he accomplished. Howard Smith is a young Negro, a young man without position or prestige, but a person of great potential in his unwavering faith in God, in himself and in people.

This young Negro laid out his stake in the American pioneering tradition of taking chances. He found a short-cut around the obstacle of expensive flying lessons. Parachute jumping, in the days when this was a hazardous business of imperfect parachutes and thrill-hungry circuses, was the short-cut to get the financial requisites for a pilot's great career. Howard Smith formed a partnership with Mack Gravelly, another young Negro with the will to succeed, and together they made up the daring team of Skip and Skippy. They barnstormed southern California, taking part in aerial circuses in which they were famed for delayed chute openings, free falls, breakaway jumps and spot landings—daring death in daily nonchalance.

In this life of speed thrills and breath-taking stunts in daily association with men of all classes in the world of wings there was no race prejudice. There was comradeship. Men of daring and skill respected each other, joked with each other, mourned when one of their fraternity cracked up. Skin color was there a thing to be accepted, as it is when a man has blue eyes or brown eyes, red hair or black hair.

Skippy Smith was a daring young man, with the courage that goes beyond physical bravery. He dared to think. He had the courage to think beyond the Negro's acceptance of the white man as an enemy—he reasoned that there is a great dynamo of comradeship that already exists in our United States. It only requires some daring-doers to set the wheels in motion, to break those bonds of inertia and fear that have chained the dynamo. It is the Negro's task to dare, in humility and faith to show the community in which he lives the power of this dynamo of comradeship between races.

There was comradeship in danger. But the team of Skip and Skippy paid the price of daring. Skip Gravelly was killed during an exhibition jump in which he had used a borrowed parachute. He died because the parachute was not equipped with a speed opening device known as a pilot chute. Skippy mourned his friend, and he determined to do something to keep the memory of Skip Gravelly ever green. Skippy's golden dream of a greater comradeship among the racial components of our American democracy was bound up with his dedication of himself to his dead partner.

Howard "Skippy" Smith set himself to learn about parachutes—every detail of their manufacture. By force of his ingratiating personality he was able to obtain employment at the Standard Parachute Company of San Diego, Cal., and was the first Negro to be employed at skilled work inside the plant. Skippy Smith made good there. He worked first as a drop-tester, then as packer, as rigger, and finally as inspector. Ambitious, yet unassuming and quietly efficient, Howard Smith won the respect and enthusiastic interest of Col. C. E. Fauntleroy, president of Standard Parachute.

For Skippy, as for all American Negroes, the war brought that long sought break in the high wall of race barriers—it brought a quickening of the dream of a democracy come true. This new hope activated Skippy's old dream. He dared to ask Colonel Fauntleroy to give him a sub-contract to manufacture pilot chutes—the equipment that would have saved Skip Gravelly, the equipment that does save so many daring young fighters of the United Nations. Such is the power of Skippy's personality that he got this contract without even a factory building for the ante on his bid. His savings were small, but they paid the rent on a factory building and financed a part payment on machinery. Then Skippy Smith headed for Los Angeles for the big task of raising the rest of the required capital.

That presumptuous beginning was small daring indeed, compared to the rest of Skippy's plan, for he intended to conduct this manufacturing business, this defense plant, on a non-racial basis—in fact, to invite the employment of a large number of races in this vital war work. The activities of parachute manufacture would make use of women's energies and skill: that these should work in a plant owned and managed by a Negro man—this is social revolution. His belief in the goodness of people and of their great oneness in our democracy convinced Skippy that harmony, not discord or anti-social outbreaks, would result from such a procedure.

Skippy Smith turned down many people who were ready to act as financial backers for an all-Negro enterprise. It seemed for a time as if he might have to yield to this narrow-mindedness, but Skippy held firm. At last he came to a man whose faith in the workability of democracy matches Skippy's own conviction. This was Eddie Anderson, "Rochester," well beloved in the radio and screen audience worlds — he was ready to put his dollars on democracy's nose.

SO THE enterprise was begun. In March 1942, the manufacture of pilot chutes and allied products was begun by the Pacific Parachute Company, of San Diego. The plant occupied one floor of a rented factory building, and its staff consisted of sixteen employes, mostly young women who had been trained in power machine sewing on an NYA project. A formal opening was held, at which the work of Pacific Parachute Company was dedicated to Skippy's dead comrade, Skip Gravelly, and to the safety of all America's airmen of victory.

Rep. Samuel Dickstein recently said, "By cutting down Schappes' imprisonment at this time you will be performing a real duty." Have you written Gov. Thomas E. Dewey at Albany, N. Y. to pardon Morris U. Schappes?

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This is the first Negro owned and Negro managed defense plant. The interest of the community of San Diego in this experiment of racial harmony and of manufacturing for victory, was shown by the attendance of representatives of the city, of labor unions, and of other important citizens who flocked to the opening ceremonies. The Women's Ambulance and Transport Corps of the area headed by Lt. Fayette Johnson was there in full force. This group asked Skippy Smith to be their instructor in parachute jumping, and these were leading white American citizens of San Diego.

That was the opening. It is now over a year later. That Pacific Parachute Company has flourished is demonstrated by the increasing volume of work put out, by the fact that it received the Army Air Corps "AA" efficiency rating, that it holds Service Awards for proficiency from prime contractor Cole of California, and the fact that Pacific Parachute shared, as sub-contractor with Cole of California, in an Army and Navy "E" Award. The plant itself has expanded from one floor to three. So much has been accomplished that the firm is soon to be out of the sub-contractor class and among those firms holding prime victory contracts.

The employe roll of Pacific Parachute Company has grown from sixteen to seventy-two. Over six racial groups are represented. Women of Swiss, Mexican, Italian, Jewish, American white and American Negro descent are working in harmony in a factory owned and managed by Negroes—by two brothers. Howard Smith has put his half-brother, a former athletic star from Northwestern University, into the position of production superintendent in the plant. The personnel director is Miss Nadine Redmond, a young woman of wide training and experience in secretarial and industrial fields. She is a Negro.

The harmony produced by this racial experiment is testified to by the employes themselves. "It's funny," says Viola Sample, Negro forewoman, "the prejudices and hates of the outside world just don't exist here." Mrs. Lena Koch, who is now training to be an inspector in the plant, frankly states that Pacific Parachute has been to her a teacher of democracy as a living power. "You'd have to work here to understand," she says. "I come from Missouri where my father used to have large farm lands. Naturally we employed Negroes. I never thought I would be working for one, and I must admit that racial tolerance was a problem with me at first. But working at Pacific has actually made me a different person. I wouldn't have missed the experience for anything." For each employe it has been the same revelation, a repeated confirmation of the truth of Skippy Smith's contention that a great golden pool of comradeship and understanding lies hidden, not too deeply, under the surface of our American life. We need only to dare a little to open this pool of great human wealth.

NEGRO leaders of vision and social-mindedness are eagerly watching this daring plan of Skippy Smith's. Mr. Floyd C. Covington, executive director of the Urban League, which is a nationwide organization devoted to integrating Negro betterment efforts, has handled the industrial relations of Pacific Parachute Company with forward-looking smoothness and finesse. Mr. Covington acknowledges that Skippy Smith's own personality is a large factor in the success of this plan, that his own loyalty to democratic ideals draws forth that same hundred percent devotion from all the people of Pacific Parachute Company.

Another exciting proof of the comradeship potentials that exist in our democracy is the relationship between Skippy and Fred Brock, a white parachute specialist in the US Marine Corps. Brock is at the plant almost daily, Marine coat off, checking and repairing machines for his dark American friend.

Eugene Karlin

The first anniversary of the founding of Pacific Parachute Company celebrated a year of production in ever increasing volume. The celebration was MC'd by "Rochester," and attended by a large number of city officials, by labor representatives, by Army and Navy dignitaries, by guests and friends of importance from all over the state. Included in the program was the presentation to Pacific Parachute Company of the Treasury Department's Minute Man "T" flag, for hundred percent employe participation in bond buying. But the featured attraction was the presentation of a two-foot-high bronze trophy from the San Diego Merchants and Manufacturers, engraved, "To Howard 'Skippy' Smith: for your outstanding performance as an exhibition parachutist and achievements in the field of parachute manufacturing and better racial understanding we elect you America's number one victory leader."

This is public acknowledgement of the truth of Skippy's belief that a great power drive of comradeship exists in our democracy. That San Diego has seen the great importance of this potential of comradeship has also been expressed in many other ways.

In housing, the community's approval of this demonstration of success in racial harmonizing has resulted in the obtaining of a broader basic criterion in public housing that has benefitted both Negroes and people of Mexican descent in the allotment of public housing in war-bloated San Diego. Impressed by Skippy's demonstration of racial achievement and inter-racial harmony, the San Diego police department took on two Negro officers, when its policy had been not to admit the race to these positions. Skippy has been given public honor by being deputized as a special police officer in the city. His station wagon was made an ambulance for civilian use in emergencies. This is significant of social change. The fact that Lt. Fayette Johnson, the first woman to be deputized as a special police officer in the city of San Diego, asked for and was given the position of head of Pacific Parachute's plant protection staff is also an indication of community interest and approval. She is a white American.

The courage to think, the will to dare in this successful establishment of a working model of democratic fellowship in production for victory—there is nothing that Howard Smith could have done or dared in the line of battlefield attacks on our enemies that could have dealt these enemies such a bitter blow.

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READERS' FORUM

A Student Speaks Up

TO NEW MASSES: Professors Edel and Riedman are to be congratulated on their fine analysis of our postwar schools. There is only one factor that I have found missing, one factor which certainly must be considered; that is the role of the students in obtaining an adequate education. Concentrating my attention at the moment on colleges and universities only, I also wish to take the liberty of using the University of Wisconsin, my alma mater, as an example. It is, I believe, a valid example, as the university has (wrongly, unfortunately) the reputation of being a liberal university.

The students of any university must and can be in the forefront of the forces struggling for a genuinely democratic education. For that purpose, however, the students must be organized into whatever progressive group exists on the campus. They must be aware of the fact that at the present time colleges are not, as they claim to be, following the American tradition of offering an education to any intelligent high school graduate, no matter how poor he may be. They also must be aware of the fact that universities are controlled by a board of regents, and that this board usually is not in favor of democracy in education.

At the University of Wisconsin, to go from the general to the particular, there have been two outstanding examples of the students' fight for more democracy in education within the last year. The first one was a fight to end racial and religious discrimination in university controlled rooming houses; the group that organized the fight met with tremendous success at first; the campus publication fully supported the battle against Jim Crow; outstanding student leaders came out for true democracy on this campus. The university administration, forced to take a stand by the reactionary board of regents, postponed action time and time again. Finally, when the regular semester ended, when most of the progressive students had left the campus, when the campus publication had stopped appearing for the season as it does every summer, the administration declared that no such thing as racial discrimination ever came to its attention. The few progressive students who remained on the campus decided to wait till fall. At that time, however, it proved to be too late to resume the fight.

Exactly one year later, again during the summer, the administration decided that the student labor union on the campus should be removed. For over half a year the union had been carrying on unsuccessful negotiations with the administration for a raise in student wages; wages had remained practically static ever since the beginning of the war, while the cost of living had been rising. The union realized that students could not do their most effective work on either an empty stomach or a sleepy brain; poor students would either have to work too much to study, or eat too little. The administration decided that, even though the union had not been getting anywhere anyway, it should be abolished. For that reason it instructed the student board, our so-called student self-government, to withdraw the union charter under a drummed up charge of non-compliance with university regulations. This time, however, the few progressives remaining on the campus put up a fight, and the student board did not kill the union.

A democratic education can only be achieved if there is democracy on the campus itself. First of all, education must be made available to anybody, regardless of financial or racial or religious grouping. Students, as the above cited examples have shown, can achieve that goal if they organize properly. Next, a truly democratic and independent student government must be set up; this government, of course, must be willing to buck the administration if that is in the interest of the student body. The student board of the University of Wisconsin, for one, is not willing to do any such thing. When the union started, the board members promptly got the word to set up a wages and hours committee, in order to find student wages adequate, even if the record proved the opposite. Examples of that kind are legion. The student board at the moment is a kind of a company union, with all the boot licking that goes with it.

Once the students have achieved true democracy and an independent student government, they can exert considerable pressure on the administration of the university as to the kind of education they want. They will be in a position to expose undemocratic professors whenever such a step might become necessary. It is not only the job of progressive educators to fight trends running counter to progress, such as the ideas advanced by Hutchins and company. It is the job of the students as well, if not more so.

Progressive students at this university are moaning about the fact that there is no real labor authority on the campus (the only "labor" man is Professor Perlman, also writer for the *New Leader*, also a good friend of Dubinsky, also an ardent follower of the Gompers line calling for labor's self-castration to appease people like Dies, etc., ad infinitum) —but they aren't doing anything about it! In other words, what our postwar schools are going to be like will depend a great deal on the students.

BADGER.

Madison, Wis.

From a Soviet Artist

The following is a letter sent to Max Weber, vice chairman of the Art Committee, National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, that will interest many NEW MASSES *readers.*

DEAR MR. WEBER: I am a Russian war artist, a soldier of the Red Army. Before the war I worked as a graphic artist. My favorite mediums are lithography, etching, and engraving, and my genre is battle drawing.

We war artists are very proud to be part of the great fight our people are putting up with tommy-gun and rifles as well as with pencil and brush.

I had the good fortune to be in action in the Stalingrad fighting. It was freezing weather at the time—forty-seven to fifty degrees below zero (centigrade). The forward defense lines ran across heaps of ruins and rubble. The Germans were only 100 feet away from us. I made very quick sketches then of the peculiarities of city fighting to be used later in bigger compositions. When we stormed the German positions I was in one of the first units that broke into the tractor plant.

In 1943 I saw action in Novorossiisk.

I have arranged exhibitions of my work right in the frontline trenches. We opened a regular frontline "art gallery" by stringing up my drawings to two telephone wires.

Later I was with the troops that made a landing at Kerch (in the Crimea). The sea was stormy when I crossed the straits to the Crimean shore on a motor boat. The cold, surging sea, the shell flashes criss-crossing all over us, made a very curious picture which I tried to convey when I came back from the front.

We have to take a minimum of material with us when we go to the front—paper, lithographic pencils, plain pencils, india ink and brushes. For rapid sketches a small album and a pen.

In regard to your albums I should like to know: Why do lithographs predominate in them? Does this rich technique, with its big possibilities, attract American artists? Do many artists use this technique? When do you have to print and work on stone? How do you achieve the fine matt surface of the stone?

May I take the liberty of asking you to send some black lithographic paint and lithographic pencils of various numbers? Are somewhat short of these.

PAVEL KIRPICHEV.

Moscow.

N.B. Contributions for the purchase of artists' materials through the fund that is being raised under the auspices of the National

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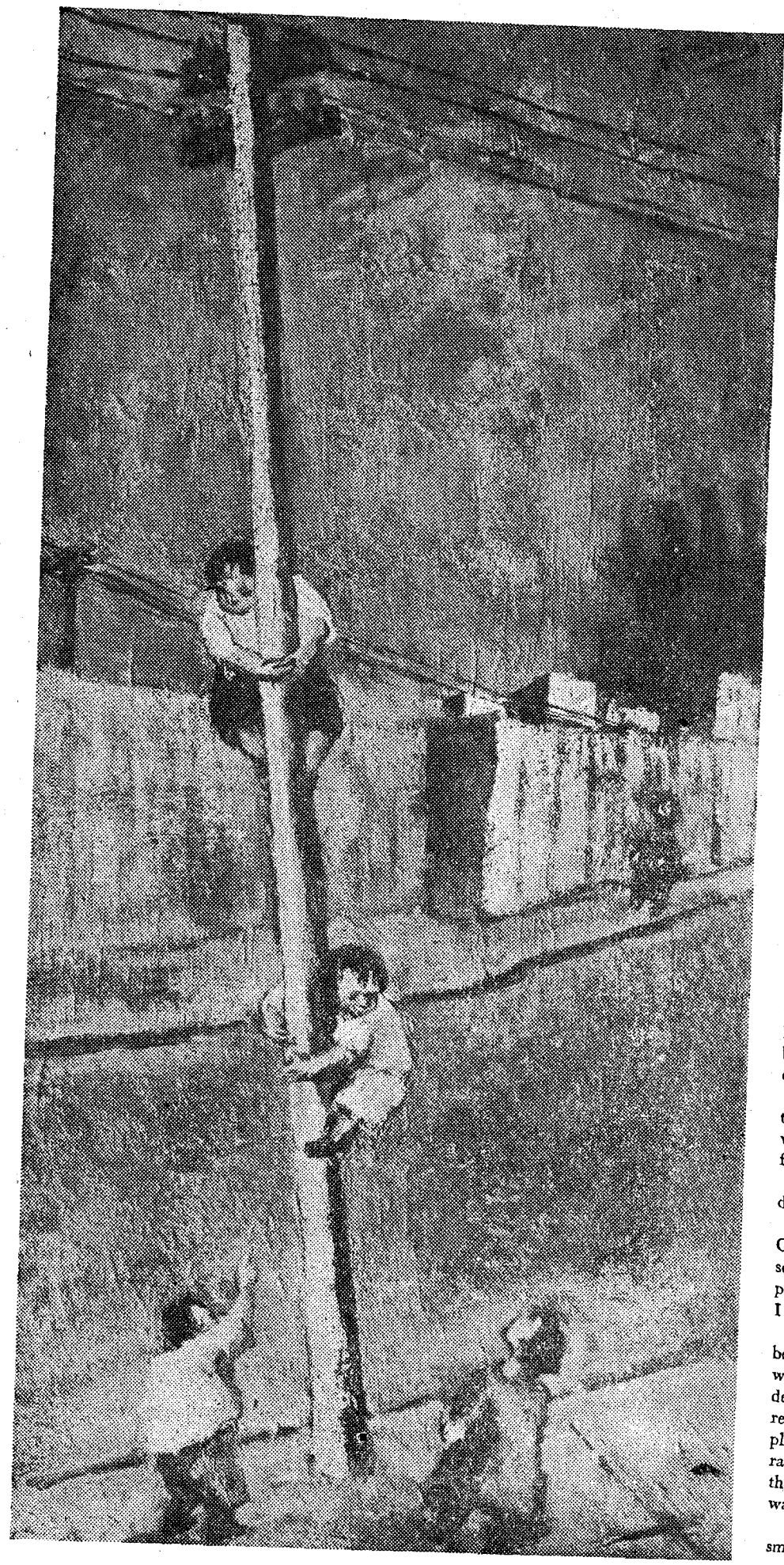

"Bravadoes," oil by Frank Kleinholz.

Council for American-Soviet Friendship will be greatly appreciated. They may be sent to Mr. Hudson Walker, Treasurer.—Max Weber, Vice Chairman.

Texas Democracy

To New Masses: About two weeks ago I sent you a check for five dollars to cover my renewal for one year to New Masses. I also included a clipping from the Galveston *News* concerning an article written by Father Carney of Dickinson, Texas (Galveston County), for what it was worth. Since Mr. Hoskins Foster of Dickinson answered this vicious article I am enclosing clipping in the same paper dated July 29 which might be of some interest to you.

Louis Levin.

Texas City, Tex.

To the *News:* About two weeks ago the *News* published a letter by Rev. Father Carney, which was intended to discredit the people who are striving to bring to the people the seriousness of today's political issues.

First I wish to answer his attack on the meeting held at the home of a local farmer. Since the meeting was organized by me I feel qualified to state its purpose and result.

The general purpose was an open discussion of local, state, and national political issues. The specific purpose was to inform the people of the conspiracy within the state Democratic Party to rob the people of Texas of their right to vote for the party's nominees for President and Vice President of the United States. The action taken at the recent state Democratic convention proves my warning both timely and correct. The intent of this action is to elect Dewey. By casting the Texas electoral vote for someone other than the Democratic nominee, they hope to throw the presidential election into the House of Representatives, where they know Dewey will be elected. This is the procedure when neither candidate receives a majority vote.

The result of this meeting was that twenty-nine people attended the precinct convention, whereas past attendance had been four or five.

If this be Communism, Father Carney, what do you propose?

You would have the people believe that Communism is the enemy of all mankind and so does the capitalist whose wealth is made possible through exploitation of the workers. I ask you, Father, whose side are you on?

As for the boys over there, let us remember that it was the capitalist throughout the world that rearmed Germany in the hope of destroying Communism in the USSR. Let us remember that as far back as 1936 the USSR pleaded for a coalition of the world democracies to block the growth of fascism, but this plea was scorned and the result is the war we are now fighting.

I agree with you, Father Carney, "let's smoke 'em out," the enemies of democracy.

Hoskins Foster, Jr.

Dickinson, Tex.

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ORIGIN OF A TRAGEDY

By BODO UHSE

DEUTSCHLAND: SEIN ODER NICHT SEIN? (Germany: To Be Or Not To Be), *by Paul Merker. Vol. I. From Weimar to Hitler. Published by El Libro Libre, Apartado 2958, Mexico City.*

GRANTED that nothing can be done to alter the events of the past there is still a good deal that can be learned from studying them. The greater the urgency with which problems of the near future thrust themselves upon us, with that much greater diligence and thoroughness must we reach back into the past to understand and master the problems of the days to come. To be sure, such an enterprise produces useful results only if it is pursued with complete earnestness, i.e., not merely for the sake of finding confirmation of one's personal idiosyncrasies or to find sanction for the errors of the past but with a will to represent reality and to reveal the true shape of history. The person who sets out to achieve such a goal must have not only a thorough knowledge of the circumstances, the forces, the people, and the events of the period under scrutiny but, in addition, a living faith regarding the basic principles of human society. The third and not least important attribute is that Galilean courage that prompts one to proclaim the truth one has come to believe in.

I am not aware of any other attempt to depict the history of the German republic that does justice to these three requirements as does this work by Paul Merker. The book appears at a moment when the entire world hourly anticipates decisive events in the war of the United Nations against fascist Germany. No matter what efforts and sacrifices we may be called on to make to extirpate National Socialism, one thing remains certain—Hitler's defeat is irrevocable and the military triumph of the democratic powers has come into close perspective.

In the light of such expectations it is perfectly understandable why vigorous discussions regarding Germany's future should be taking place at this time. The Allied governments are getting ready to assume the responsibilities that will fall to them when victory is won, and the problem of giving to Europe a lasting peace will have to be solved. The German political refugees who see the moment of their repatriation approaching are confronted with serious obligations—and in their circles it is only natural that the divergence of views regarding the future of Germany should assume a more agitated form.

HOW was it that the German republic could not last longer than a mere fifteen years? Who was responsible for its disintegration? Could Hitler's accession to power have been prevented?

These are but a few of the questions that form the core of current discussions. Paul Merker's profound study of the rise, the history, and the end of the German republic pursues with meticulous care the course of the political, economic, and social developments, deals with the above mentioned and other questions, and furnishes sound and unequivocal answers. Merker's intimate knowledge of political events within Germany, her economic relations, and last but not least, his personal participation in the German anti-fascist struggle for many years authorizes him to judge the past with candor and balance.

Not a few voices will make themselves heard in opposition to his judgments. We will hear objections from those who, like Erika Mann, the daughter of Thomas Mann, do not acknowledge any difference between the Nazis and the rest of the German people, and have therefore no interest in an account of the self-sacrificing struggles of the German working class against the Hitler movement. There will be criticism from those who have contributed to deplorable developments in Germany, actively or passively, and while living in exile "have neither learned nor forgotten anything." Social-Democratic leaders like Friedrich Stampfer, political heads like Bruening and people of the stamp of Treviranus—in short all those who have consciously or unwittingly helped to deliver the German people into the hands of Hitler and who, in exile, have not divested themselves of their errors or even recognized them—will hurl themselves wrathfully against a work that shows their historic guilt. In their protestations they will thunder out with even greater frenzied indignation in a renewed attempt to play their former role.

It is, therefore, quite certain that they will take a hostile stand toward a historic work that leaves no doubt about their part during and after the first World War and their complicity in bringing about this one. One and the same road leads from the vote in favor of the war budget cast by the Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag on Aug. 4, 1914, down to support given by some sixty Social-Democratic deputies to Hitler's resolution on foreign policy at the session of May 17, 1933.

It is in keeping with the facts of historical reality that in this story of the Weimar Republic we encounter all the stages on the road from Friedrich Ebert's league with the high command of the army on Nov. 10, 1918, to the rejection of the Communist proposal of Jan. 31, 1933, to overthrow the Hitler regime by means of a general strike. The documented guilt of the leaders of German Social Democracy is here brought into bold relief. It was they who during the war of 1914-18 made common cause with German imperialism, representing the interests of monopoly capital within the ranks of the German working class (with their theory of "political wages" and their policy of joint action with the reactionary officers against the revolutionary section of the workers) and prevented working class unity at the time of its struggles against the fascist bid for power.

Merker never relaxes in his effort to make necessary distinctions and differentiations. The discussion at the Magdeburg convention of the SPD (Socialist Party of Germany) and the conduct of the Social-Democratic left are minutely examined. Wherever the will to give battle to the fascist forces finds expression, mention of it has not been neglected: Grezinski's readiness to use the Berlin police against the Papen govern-

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ment, Aufhaeuser's opposition to the destruction of the trade unions, negotiations with the representatives of the Prussian government before June 20, 1932, and Stampfer's willingness to consider an exchange of views on the future relations between the KPD (Communist Party of Germany) and the SPD, which came to naught immediately following the Reichstag fire.

Merker writes: "The Communists were always the enemies of fascism and Nazism. The struggle they waged out of this mortal hostility was not directed against Social-Democracy but against Hitler. The battle cost the German Communists tens of thousands of casualties in dead and hundreds of thousands of others who were cast into dungeons and concentration camps. Not Wels, Braun, and Hilferding, as is repeatedly asserted, but Hitler, was regarded by the Communists as the arch-enemy in the struggle. However, viewed historically, it so happens that within the ranks of labor, this Social-Democratic leadership was the chief opponent of collaboration between the Social-Democrats and the Communists."

This statement acquires greater co-

Statement

The Independent Voters' Committee of the Arts and Sciences for Roosevelt was officially put into motion last week when more than 600 writers, artists, scientists, educators, musicians, radio, theatrical, and motion picture people opened campaign headquarters at the Hotel Astor. Following is the statement of aims, and the committee members:

WE ARE hundreds of artists, scientists, and writers who have organized ourselves into an independent voters' committee. Our purpose, first and foremost, is the reelection of President Roosevelt. We are American citizens, Democrats, Republicans, and independent voters, united in support of our President and the issues he represents.

We are deeply conscious that at this moment our country, and indeed the whole world, stands on the threshold of a new era. We see this new era coming to life through the defeat of fascism on the battlefields of the world. Our soldiers, along with the soldiers of our allies, are destroying those who would have destroyed us.

But though fascism is being destroyed, a great struggle still lies ahead. The war must still be won; peace must be kept. The great productive forces of America, which armed the world, must continue to operate in the postwar years. There must be an end to poverty and oppression.

Out of the discussions and agreements of Moscow, Cairo, and Teheran, came a method for destroying the enemy. The enemy is being destroyed. Out of those conferences too, came a hope for the future peace and security of the world. That hope is being augmented and developed. Bretton Woods was a step forward; Dumbarton Oaks is another. Democratic governments are being brought forward by the administration to convert to peacetime production, to give security to the men and women of America.

In all of these conferences, our President played a great and significant part and we believe he was supported by the majority of the people of the United States. We take our place with that majority. We support President Roosevelt who has stated his own position in the following words:

"To win this war wholeheartedly, unequivocally and as quickly as we can is our task of the first importance. To win this war in such a way that there can be no further world wars in the foreseeable future is our second objective. To provide occupations, and to provide a decent standard of living for our men in the armed forces after the war, and for all Americans, are the final objectives."

WRITERS: Louis Adamic, Franklin P. Adams, William Rose Benet, Konrad Bercovici, Millen Brand, Henrietta Buckmaster, Bennet Cerf, Dr. Will Durant, Clifton Fadiman, Howard Fast, Edna Ferber, Waldo Frank, Frank Gervasi, Burnet Hershey, Langston Hughes, Fannie Hurst, George S. Kaufman, Arthur Kober, Lillian Hellman, Emil Lengyel, Moss Hart, Alain Locke, William McFee, Dorothy Parker, Waldo Peirce, Quentin Reynolds, Carl Sandburg, M. Lincoln Schuster, Rex Stout, Genevieve Taggard, Mark Van Doren, and Edward Chodorov.

THEATER AND MOTION PICTURE PEOPLE: Tallulah Bankhead, Ethel Barrymore, Diana Barrymore, Elisabeth Bergner, Irene Bordoni, Harry Brandt, J. Edward Bromberg, Anne Burr, Eddie Cantor, Stewart Chaney, Mady Christians, Alexander H. Cohen, Norman Corwin, Cheryl Crawford, Russel Crouse, Bette Davis, Agnes George de Mille, Howard Dietz, Guy Pene du Bois, Jose Ferrer, Dorothy Fields, Frederick B. Fox, Martin Gabel, John Garfield, John Gassner, Rosamond Gilder, Margalo Gilmore, John Golden, Ruth Gordon, Abel Green, Uta Hagen, Oscar Hammerstein, June Havoc, Libby Holman, George Jessel, Oscar Karlweiss, Paula Lawrence, Canada Lee, Eugenie Leontovich, Howard Lindsay, Phillip Loeb, Richard Maney, Eddie Nugent, Clifford Odets, Samson Raphaelson, Paul Robeson, Hazel Scott, Oscar Serlin, Herman Shumlin, Lee Simonson, Gloria Stuart, Michael Todd, Benay Venuta, Fredi Washington, Bretaigne Windust, Monty Woolley, Alex Yokel, George Coulouris, and Muriel Smith.

ARTISTS: Alexander Archipenko, Thomas Hart Benton, Nicolai Cikovsky, Robert M. Cronbach, Adolf Dehn, Philip Evergood, Hugo Gellert, Chaim Gross, Robert Gwathmey, Al Hirschfield, Peter Hurd, Rockwell Kent, Julian Clar-

(*Continued on page 26*)

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gency because of the great frankness with which Merker discusses the political conduct of the Communists, whose errors he analyzes time and again. He criticizes the program of the KPD that called for national and social liberation and not for the defense of democracy. He condemns the Communist position with reference to the Prussian plebiscite and vigorously criticizes the semi-anarchistic views of Neumann and Rommele. We find similar self-critical comments in several places in the book.

The problem of working class unity was central to the struggle against Nazism. Had this unity been established Hitler could never have come to power. By what means, then, could it have been attained? The answer is simple: "Had Social-Democracy rallied, at the time, to active steps against fascism not even the most boundless indignation of the revolutionary workers towards Wels, Braun, and Severing, would have kept them from joining in the battle together with their Social-Democratic comrades."

A resolute method of dealing with reaction was at that time demanded not by the Communists alone but likewise by the bourgeois politicians, such as Dr. Weber, chairman of the German State Party, the Catholic Hirtsiefer, and the democratic Minister of Finance Klepper, who were interceding on behalf of a vigorous drive against the machinations of Papen, Schleicher, and Hitler. Merker shows that from the spring of 1932 until February 1933, the opportunity to scotch Nazism presented itself time and again if only the trade unions and the parties of labor had joined for a common onslaught.

The SPD, whose leaders rejected the struggle, was decimated and demoralized by Hitler. The Communist Party of Germany having summoned its energies to a struggle aimed at halting Hitler's advance, succeeded, thanks to its militant spirit, in keeping its organization alive illegally and in carrying on an uninterrupted fight against the Nazi regime until this very day.

As Merker's work demonstrates, the Communists never entertained any illusion concerning the nature of the National Socialist regime. For such deceptive views as were disseminated through the catch phrases "dictatorship of the middle class," and "managerial revolution" there is no place in Merker's profound analysis. The Nazi ties with heavy industry, the Junkers, and the clique of generals are disclosed with painstaking exactness. Conflicting interests, factional warfare, manifold inter-family feuds that have contributed to blur the picture, especially in the Schleicher era, are here reviewed expertly. The threads that connected Hitler with Krupp and Thyssen, with Bosh, Siemens, and Voegler and vice versa, are clearly shown. The financial channels that carried the flow of money to the Nazis prior to their seizure of power and through which ran the currents of interest and compound interest back to their supporters and all of it wrung from the German people, are here uncovered for all to see. It is a cunning and complicated system. Its basic formula, however, is quite simple: The National Socialist regime is the most brutal, naked, and predatory form of German imperialism.

"The tragedy of the German people," writes Merker in the first sentence of his book, "consists in this, that in its struggle for national liberation and in the risings of its toilers for political freedom and for social equality, it was never the revolutionary but always the reactionary forces that gained the upper hand." Such is the case with the chapter of history brought under discussion in this volume. If it does not leave us depressed and, if despite all that the pages of this book bring to our attention we manage to sustain the hope of better days to come —if it still allows us to cherish the expectation that the German people themselves will eventually put an end to this tragic story, this is in no wise in consequence of the author's brush-work. Quite the opposite, it is due to the thoughtful earnestness of treatment, to the serenity and sober judgment to which Paul Merker leads us, in this book, through Germany's penultimate vale of tears.

The "Camera Eye"

STATE OF THE NATION, *by John Dos Passos. Houghton Mifflin. $3.*

THERE is something slightly presumptuous about a man who packs up his suitcase, hops a train, and then writes a book of observations modestly entitled *State of the Nation*. Of course, Mr. John Dos Passos is not an ordinary fellow—though he insists that he is like you and me, a "guy," an American with an ear for the cadences of this multi-accented nation, a fervid Diogenes in search of finality. What Mr. Dos Passos brings to his job, in his own judgment, is a superb objectivity. He is superior to ballyhoo, which he excoriates; he is beyond the ordinary influences that color the conclusions of the more gullible amongst us. Mr. Dos Passos is a sort of self-appointed photographic plate recording the world about him. Truth is revealed to him, because he is prepared to accept the truth before which he stands open-mouthed and oh! so humble.

Mr. Dos Passos presents himself as a trained observer. He says, "I've lived through enough years of shift and change by now to know that it is not the professed aims people are striving to achieve that set the pattern of the future, but the habits of behavior they take on in the process." He is also a listener. To the salesman in the Pullman washroom who asks what is Mr. Dos Passos' "line," and who growls, "So you're the guy who knows all the answers," Mr. Dos Passos humbly replies, "No, I ask other people. They tell me the answers."

The only criticism one can raise to the results of Mr. Dos Passos' explorations as recorded in *State of the Nation* is that he ran into the damndest bunch of people and experiences. Nothing dramatic, of course, or even bizarre. But if a man set out with a camera to depict the American scene and took pictures all over the nation exclusively of garbage dumps, outhouses, sewers, and back alleys, the result could well be overspecialized. Such is the method followed by the eager Mr. Dos Passos, and the end product is discouraging. One can only conclude from *State of the Nation* that to be objective is to hear nothing but pessimism and defeatism, to see only the ugly and contemptible. Mr. Dos Passos talked to a host of people while wandering through this broad and sprawling country, and all of them, without exception, were cynical or at best uninterested in the war; all of them doubted the justice of the fight against fascism, if they thought about the problem at all. Most people are not aware that we are fighting the Nazis; Mr. Dos Passos, it appears, is only concerned with the struggle against the Japanese. (Could it be that the war against Germany is unmentionable because the Soviet Union is also fighting Hitlerism?) Most people don't see beyond the nose on their faces, according to Mr. Dos Passos. If his report is to be credited, the nation is in a pretty bad way. Or rather, to be accurate, Mr. Dos Passos concludes that the nation is healthily steeped in hopelessness, provincialism, isolationism, and unperceiving egotism. Objectivity as practiced by the peripatetic Mr. Dos Passos proves conclusively for him that the entire nation believes and thinks in terms that are his own particular prejudices.

It is peculiar that in all his jaunts Mr. Dos Passos met no person who had

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any real use for President Roosevelt. Everyone he talked to—and he insists on his intimacy with workers and poor farmers, and small entrepreneurs—was disgusted with the administration. No one praised Britain or the Soviet Union. Most were anti-Negro, and Mr. Dos Passos, with his shiny honesty, lovingly sets down the prejudices and hypocrisies—and since he is so objective, he just sets them down and lets it go at that. The labor movement almost unanimously worships John L. Lewis. Labor's political action goes unmentioned.

The only liberty Mr. Dos Passos allows his inimitable soul is in the interchapters which recall the old "Camera-Eye" of his earlier novels. Reluctantly I admit that: (1) I get bored with high-falutin' descriptions that don't seem to have much point; and worse, (2) I usually don't understand what Mr. Dos Passos is getting at. That is nothing new for me—I never did catch the idea of the impressionistic Camera-Eye, and in my more iconoclastic moods I frankly questioned if they meant anything even to the author.

I suppose it was naive of me to presume that the American people actually believe in democracy and such things. I now learn from Mr. Dos Passos that no one—including Mr. Dos Passos—has ever heard of Teheran. I now learn that everyone all over the country is convinced that after the war comes the deluge—unemployment, starvation, disease, misery—and one might as well face the inevitable. I now learn that everywhere everyone suspects everything, anticipates the worst, is convinced of the essential rottenness and venality of every other living human being, usually including the individual's own wife and children. One thing Mr. Dos Passos stresses is that only the feeble-minded have confidence in or hope for the future.

All praise to the objective Mr. Dos Passos! He has taken the pulse of the American people and it turns out that their hearts stopped beating generations ago. What you and I think we see is only an illusion. The country has been debauched, this war is a fake, life is nasty, our Russian, British, and Chinese allies are a bunch of grifters, nothing is decent or alive or progressive except the despairing grunts of Mr. Dos Passos who gives off the true sound of revolt.

In addition to all these virtues, the book is profoundly dull. And to describe *State of the Nation* as "dull" is to rival Mr. Dos Passos in patient objectivity.

BRUCE MINTON.

Statement

(*Continued from page* 24)

ence Levi, Julian E. Levi, Tsamu Noguchi, Elizabeth Olds, Hugo Robus, Boardman Robinson, John Sloan, Louis Slobodkin, Abraham Walkowitz, Warren Wheelock, and Wanda Gag.

MUSICIANS: Larry Adler, Aaron Copland, Olin Downes, Dean Dixon, Shep Fields, Josef Hofmann, Alexander Kipnis, Serge Koussevitsky, Yehudi Menuhin, Nathan Milstein, Wilfred Pelletier, Mishel Piastro, Artur Schnabel, Alexander Smallens, Lawrence Tibbett, Teddy Wilson, Richard Rodgers, Sigmund Spaeth, Vernon Duke.

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Missouri TVA

(*Continued from page* 12)

thority has just begun. Reactionaries and pro-Hoover states-rights Republicans will do all in their power to block progressive legislation of this nature. Action is needed not only in the Missouri Valley but all over the country to pass Senator Murray's Bill. District 8 is planning to organize conferences of labor, farm, civic, industry, and church groups throughout the nine Valley states to support the MVA Bill in Congress. A Missouri Valley Authority is regional postwar planning at its very best. All local unions should support this legislation with a resolution campaign, news articles, and letters to their Congressmen.

Senator Murray has quoted President Roosevelt, when asking for legislation creating the TVA, as using these words: "If we are successful here (in the Tennessee Valley) we can march on, step by step, in a like development of other great natural territorial units within our borders." And the Senator very aptly added: "We were successful in the Tennessee Valley beyond our fairest dreams. The time has now come to march on into the great Valley of the Missouri."

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"WILSON" AND THE BOX OFFICE

By RING LARDNER, JR.

THE War Department's temporary ban of the picture *Wilson* was immediately recognized in Hollywood as a serious threat to the freedom of the screen. Initial protests had been launched and forces were being mobilized for much broader action when the ban was reversed and Congress set about repealing Senator Taft's appalling Title V of the Soldier Vote Act.

As Eleanor Roosevelt has pointed out, it is difficult to take seriously Senator Taft's attempt to switch the blame to a misinterpretation by the Army of his words. It is much more likely that the Republican strategist realized he had over-extended himself in his campaign to blockade our armed forces from any contact with the real issues of the election and decided on a temporary withdrawal to avoid annihilation by an outraged public opinion.

The Army ban was completely justified—according to the law originally passed. Taft's censorship section forbade the distribution of any material "containing political argument or political propaganda of any kind designed or calculated to affect the result of any election." And *Wilson* contains political arguments. It is a formidable campaign document for Roosevelt. Even Darryl Zanuck, a Republican who has never voted for Roosevelt, must realize that—though perhaps a trifle reluctantly.

The chances are that the picture would never have been made if Zanuck had known a year ago that Wendell Willkie, chairman of the Board of Twentieth Century-Fox Pictures, would drop out of the presidential race. In a Roosevelt-Willkie contest, the content of *Wilson* would have no great bearing on the outcome. In a Roosevelt-Dewey contest, it is a powerful weapon.

There is nothing to prevent the Republicans from using similar weapons—except the fact that they can't find any. They have plenty of enthusiastic supporters in Hollywood, but no one has yet suggested making a biographical picture about Hoover or Harding. It is a tribute to Senator Taft's understanding of the situation that he saw the danger of letting both sides of the case be presented.

Now that the censorship question has been resolved, there is an issue raised by *Wilson* which is of even greater significance to Hollywood. In his NEW MASSES review of the picture, Joseph Foster referred to Zanuck's statement at the Writers Congress last year that if *Wilson* failed to return a profit, "I will never make another picture without Betty Grable in it." Mr. Foster proceeded to predict that *Wilson* will not fail. I wish I shared his confidence, but my guess is that it will lose money. If it does, and the reasons for such failure are not properly understood, it may be a serious deterrent to the progress of American motion pictures.

Neither reviewers nor audiences are apt to include the factor of potential profit to the producing company in their appraisals of pictures. We who work in Hollywood can't afford to ignore it, particularly when a picture is as important a landmark in screen history as *Wilson* is and when its producer has been as frank as Zanuck about his motives. The fact that *Mission to Moscow* just about broke even in a year when almost any type of picture made a substantial profit is constantly cited by the advocates of making purely escapist films. And the writer, director, or producer who wants to make a picture of equal significance cannot answer the argument by pointing to its laudable political effect. He must demonstrate the box-office advantages of his projected picture over *Mission to Moscow*.

I AM not, therefore, dissenting from the great majority of the praise that has been showered on *Wilson* when I bring up some of its shortcomings. I am merely trying to avoid a plethora of Betty Grable. I disagree strongly with John Lardner in the *New Yorker* that "even Gerald L. K. Smith would like Mr. Zanuck's *Wilson*" and with Manny Farber in the *New Republic* that the picture is "tedious and impotent." Whatever its weaknesses and historical distortions, it takes a forthright position on a controversial chapter in American history which is acutely pertinent today. It is also a definite step forward in a technique of picture making which is still in an experimental stage.

Zanuck's major mistake, in my opinion, was precisely what he obviously felt to be his shrewdest move—to sugar a pill of dubious box-office appeal with a thick coating of "production values." His dependence on this strategy is borne out by the fact that the trailer which advertizes the picture is an absurd attempt to delude people into thinking it's a musical and to sell it, not on its subject material, but on statistics about its scope and cost.

There is a tremendous range in production costs of feature-length pictures made in Hollywood, extending from a floor of about $60,000 to a ceiling, so far, of about $4,000,000. Budgets of the most expensive pictures, like *Wilson* and *Gone With the Wind*, are swelled by names and numbers in the cast, lavish sets, use of Technicolor and by a long shooting schedule which increases not only the cost of the production itself but the percentage of the studio overhead which the picture must carry. A picture like *Wilson* might gross as much as, say, *Hitler's Children* and barely break even. *Hitler's Children*, produced at less than one-tenth the cost, has probably made a profit of over 1,000 percent.

I would guess that *Wilson* will have

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to take in about $6,000,000 at the box-office in order to make a profit on its negative cost plus the cost of distribution. Such a goal can only be attained by an enormously successful picture—a picture with the widest possible appeal for all classes of movie-goers. I believe that at the present time no good picture about Wilson and the struggle for the League of Nations could arouse such unanimous interest. There is still a considerable section of the public which flatly refuses to see pictures that "preach" at them. These people are being gradually converted but they cannot be taken by storm. However magnificent the sets and impressive the crowd scenes, they will not be seduced.

That is why I feel it would have been sounder policy to make a picture about Wilson for perhaps half the cost of Zanuck's production and sell it honestly and on its merits to the ever-widening audience for such screen fare. Such a film could have covered the best part of the same material and achieved the same high level of writing, direction, and acting. I believe that it would have attracted at least ninety percent of the customers that *Wilson* will, broadened the audience for future pictures of similar content, made a tidy profit and stimulated other producers to stop trying to think up a new twist on *Stella Dallas* or *Smilin' Through*.

There are two factors which brighten the prospects for *Wilson* and which Zanuck obviously took into account. One is that it will undoubtedly make a far larger proportion of its gross in the expanding foreign market than the average picture. The other is that it is an excellent subject for revival over a period of years. But even if these considerations resulted in balancing the books for Twentieth Century-Fox, it wouldn't still the protests of American exhibitors whose intake failed to justify the high rental price of the picture.

If I were writing a review of *Wilson*, I would speak in almost completely admiring terms of Lamar Trotti's screenplay. Even his idealization of his subject, ignoring as it does the complexity of motivations that put America into the war in 1917 and the limitations of Wilson's internationalist thinking, is dramatically justifiable. And most of the lags in the pace of the picture result not from the writing but from Director Henry King's occasional infatuations with the size of the sets and number of extras at his disposal.

But I am speaking of faults, and there are two which may be charged to Trotti and to almost every writer of "epic" screen biographies as well. These are a failure to confine the subject material within proper dramatic limits and the delusion that the way to humanize a great man is to provide him with a banal family life.

A biography in book form can tell the story of a man's life. A biographical picture, it seems to me, must restrict itself to a single unified dramatic thread of his life. In the case of *Wilson*, it is obviously his struggle for lasting peace—an issue that does not arise in Trotti's picture till the halfway mark. The result is that the first half of the picture, though it contains just as many finely conceived scenes, lacks the continuity of interest and conflict of the latter half. One way of overcoming this defect would have been to confine the scope of the action in time to the years of his fight for the League. Another would have been to cover the whole eleven years of his political career but only in terms of foreign policy.

I appreciate the limitations which Trotti faced in portraying the domestic aspects of Wilson's life; a writer cannot accomplish much in the way of characterization when his work is subject to the approval of the real persons themselves or their families. And the family scenes do accomplish the purpose of revealing Wilson's rather heavy-handed but presumably characteristic humor.

But there is an appalling sameness to the home life of all the historical figures portrayed in Hollywood pictures. The family is always a close and harmonious unit, the wife self-effacing but conscious of the great man's dependence on her. There seems to be a generally accepted theory that one real personality per family is enough.

None of these mistakes detract greatly from the enormous credit due Zanuck, Trotti, and King for their achievement. They would have merely academic significance were it not for the inferences that might be drawn, should the unbounded admiration with which the picture has been hailed by most reviewers be followed by a disappointing return at the box-office. It is high time that everyone interested in the art of the motion picture realized that it is also a capitalist business in which profit is the measure of success.

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FILMS

THE marihuana technique that palmed off absurdity for social satire in *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* has subsided somewhat in *Hail the Conquering Hero*, but enough of the mannerism is present to assure Preston Sturges' followers that the master is still around. In the eyes of most of the critics, he is more of a whizz than ever. With the advent of his latest product at the Paramount, the previewers turned handsprings of joy over what they consider the most original talent in Hollywood, the keen historian of American mores. As an explanation, I can only conclude that Sturges has the Indian sign on the commentators. Let us, as the political statisticians say, look at the record.

The Great Maginty, while no pioneer, was certainly a first rate piece of satire. This is true in a smaller measure of *Christmas in July*. In *Sullivan's Travels*, the kindest thing that could be said for Sturges is a complete ignorance of the issues with which the film concerned itself; the worst, that he leaned dangerously close to the worst kind of reaction to be found in this country. In *Something About Eve* and *Palm Beach Story*, he is closer to the pattern of slick social comedies in which Paramount specializes than he is to the qualities that made *Maginty* an outstanding picture. In all these films, however, shrewdness rather than originality is the outstanding trait, a shrewdness that takes less and less risk with each succeeding picture. His characters, especially in his last films, are usually slapstick copies of original social types. Thus we get not just an ordinary telephone operator, but the gum chewing rattlebrain made safe by years of stage usage. His Jew is no average American citizen, but a character by the name of Slattery who speaks in broad, joke-book dialect. Any one of his characters must be ready to take a pratfall when the going gets thin, and most of them do. The hero of *Miracle* is not only a bewildered, well-meaning dimwit whose behavior borders on the antics made famous by Keystone comedies, but he is also invested with the stammers. Sturges never takes a chance.

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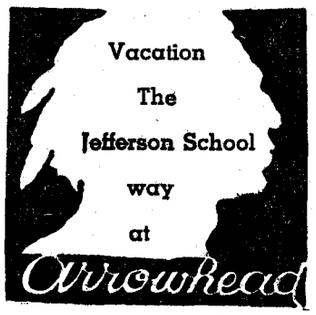

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but in trimmings as well. A sure fire laugh-getter since the first camera was invented is the small town band playing off cue at receptions. The *Conquering Hero* uses four, trusting that four times the noise and confusion will produce four times as much laughter.

But it is in the development of plot and situation that Sturges fails as a satirist. Take *Conquering Hero*. Eddie Bracken, a Marine-struck small towner, is discharged from the Marines because of hay fever. He can't go home because he wants to pose as a hero to his mother and friends. Five Marines hear his story and rush him home with borrowed medals, a uniform, and manufactured stories of valor. A little on the wacky side, but let it pass. When he gets home the trouble starts. The action really thickens when he is chosen by a grim and serious delegation of businessmen to run for mayor. I maintain that only the wisecrack impulse could conceive of an Eddie Bracken running for any major office. No group of characters, as presented in this film, if left to themselves, could ever bring about the situations as they occur on the screen. If ever behavior were arbitrarily imposed, you will find it in this film. Under the circumstance, it is a little difficult to take seriously the plot developments that follow, or to believe that the film comes off as a satire on the returning hero theme.

Preston Sturges has to his credit a sharp eye for the ridiculous, and the ability to get more out of a stock situation than almost any of his colleagues. But that is a far cry from original writing. Maybe if he didn't stack the cards so often, and depended more on inventiveness and less on shrewdness, he might get closer to what he is supposed to be.

I HAVE it on the word of people who remember the original play that *Kismet* was a tongue-in-cheeker which kidded the pants off the romantic Bagdad theme. In the current picture version at the Astor (and try to get in) Ronald Colman, who plays the male lead of Hafiz the beggar, is self-conscious from time to time about his role, and Marlene Dietrich, who makes escapism easy, lets you know that her gilded gams are more than mere tools of locomotion. But in general, the film takes itself and its pageantry seriously. In which case you have another nursery classic in Technicolor in the image of *The Thief of Bagdad, Ali Baba*, etc. Since it is made by MGM, which has a larger surplus than any other studio, it is more lush, has

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In contrast to this monument of opulence is a film of comparable theme at the Stanley, *Adventure in Bokhara*. Like its fancier neighbor up the street its main character is a picaresque hero whose neck is always one wiggle ahead of the noose. Since it was made in Soviet Tashkent, the hero is more in the tradition of Till Eulenspiegel than of a self-enriching schemer. In spite of the fact that it boasts no Technicolor or million-dollar budget, or maybe because of it, it bears far more authenticity in its decor, music, and action. A vase carelessly placed in the corner of a set, a wisp of off-screen music, carries more of an Oriental air than scores of richly caparisoned gals dancing to dozens of horns and cymbals.

Adventure in Bokhara, however, is directed and acted just a little too broadly for authentic folk material. The action is somewhat too pat and the picture has more slow moments than a film of this kind has any right to have. However, the music, dialogue, and historic background save it from failure.

I THINK that *Mr. Winkle Goes to War* has been badly treated by the local press. There are several points of importance introduced, and despite is obvious weakness it has much to commend it. The film will be discussed in detail in a later issue. JOSEPH FOSTER.

Paris Dateline

(*Continued from page* 9)

The arms got through. They always will if willing hands are there to receive. Tyranny is ever vulnerable, provided the people retain the will toward freedom, the impulse toward fight. Paris had that: France has that. And wherever you find it, you find no spurious considerations can block that will. Past differences dissolve in that will: what if you worship differently than I? what if your party is not mine? If you love your country I am your brother.

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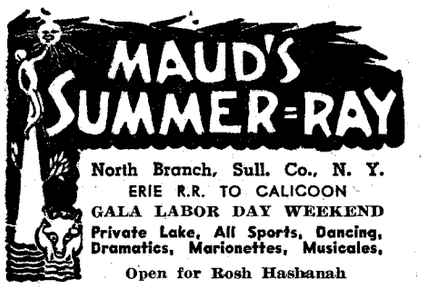

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